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THE EASTER TIDE.

BY WM. MACKINTOSH.

Lo, what a glory bathes the earth!
The sleeping flowers revive again,
Birds wake to song, and sacred mirth
Is heard throughout the world's domain.

In streams erst ice-bound now we see
The fish their merry circles wheel,
And new-born joys on shrub and tree
That hoary winter did conceal.

Hark! on this day as at His birth,
Glad praises ring from shore to shore;
For the redeemed of all the earth
Are held in Doubt's fell chains no more.

Ah! what to Him are bolts and bars?
The fount of life and source of might,
Who spread the dome with countless stars,
And bade the sun diffuse its light.

Yea, this blest morn saw Him ascend
And break the powers of Death and Hell,
While countless tongues their praises blend
To Him who doeth all things well.

A FLOWER OF FATE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WILD WARRINGTONS," "LIKE LOST SHEEP," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III—(CONTINUED.)

ON the eighth day of my new strange loneliness uncle Simon announced at breakfast—after, as it was his habit in all the weathers to do, he had met the post-boy on the moor—that he was compelled to leave home rather unexpectedly, and would start from Moor Edge that night.

Curious as it may seem to those who have troops of friends and who are blessed with near home-ties, no letters ever came to Moor Edge for me; none ever came for aunt Hannah—unless uncle Simon himself wrote to her when he was absent on a journey to apprise her of the date of his return.

I had no one in the whole world to write to or to write to me; nor do I believe had aunt Hannah herself any one save her brother Simon. So I had never received a letter in my life. As I have said, my uncle in all weather met the post-boy on the moor, and afterwards read his letters before coming into the house, sometimes in the garden and sometimes in the porch. Then, if there was anything to tell us, he told it; if there was not, he was silent.

"Going away, Simon?" whined aunt Hannah. "Oh, dear. For long?"

"Longer," said uncle Simom gently, "than usual, Hannah, I fear I shall be away this time."

"Where—where," said my aunt huskily, "are you going Simon?"

Her knotted lean hands were trembling so painfully that her black-handled knife and fork rattled in her plate; so she pushed it from her peevishly; rasher and all, and kneaded her hands into her lap beneath the table-cloth.

"I am going," replied her brother quietly, "on this occasion to Ireland, and shall be absent perhaps for a week or ten days—ten days, Hannah, at the most. After that, I believe and indeed hope that I shall have a holiday, little Flower"—playfully turning to me—"a long, quiet restful summer holiday at Moor Edge."

"I am sure I hope so too," I echoed earnestly. I had finished breakfast, and as I spoke I arose and put my hand affectionately upon uncle Simon's shoulder. He imprisoned my fingers within his own and rubbed them lightly thus against his cheek. Ah, should not I now find my loneliness doubly hard to endure—my uncle Simon being away for so long—having once known the hitherto unknown experience of feeling my life's monotony so pleasantly disturbed?

What should I do with myself and my solitude in all those coming ten long summer days, with no one but aunt Hannah for human company? Well, there were always my books—yes, they had sufficed once; and there was Jack Sprat, and there was also the free wide sweet moor.

I had never really before found my own home long and dreadful to contemplate—why should I begin to find it dull and dreadful now?

"I shall not sleep a wink the whole while you're away," sniffed aunt Hannah, gulping down her tea, the rim of her cup knocking audibly against her teeth. "I shall be ill, Simon, before you come back—see if I ain't."

"That is an old story," answered her brother, his voice mild, but his eyes turned sternly upon the quailing woman before him. "Don't you be a fool Hannah!"

"I can't help it," said she, with something between a gasp and a sob.

"Well, you had better not get frightening my little girl here out of her wits with your absurd 'jumps,'" as you call them," said my uncle, with his quiet smile.

"I can't help it if I do," said aunt Hannah again.

"You had better not!" he observed, still smiling benignly. Now however it was his pale blue eyes that seemed to smile, and the iron sternness had crept into his low voice. "It will be the worse for you if you do, woman! That is all."

With that he got up and went out into the yard. Whenever uncle Simon called his sister "woman," it was a sure sign that he was terribly angry.

A calm and summer evening arrived; tea was over, and my uncle, saying no word either to me or to aunt Hannah, went up to the attic at the roof.

He was locked up alone there for more than an hour, and when he reappeared it was between seven and eight o'clock, and the sun in wide-spreading glory was setting behind the woods of Stonyhampton. He came down dressed in his gray suit, his gray hat, his well-worn black silk neck-tie, and with his boots nicely polished. In his hand he carried the mysterious black leather bag, which this evening bulged—or, at at any rate, I fancied so—somewhat more than usual.

When he kissed aunt Hannah in the porch and said good-bye to her, she began to shiver and cry, and wiped away her tears with an end of her old pink wrapper. He patted her thin shoulder telling her not to be more foolish than usual, but to take good care of Daffodil and Daisy, the sow and her litter, and the setting hen; and then, linking his arm in mine, he led me with him as far as the garden gate. I felt very low-spirited at seeing him about to depart; and indeed, like aunt Hannah's, the tears had risen to my eyes.

"Never mind—cheer up, Flower!" said my uncle tenderly. "I shall soon be back; the time will soon pass. And, by-the-bye, dear, would you like a new gown this time, or something else to add to the little library up-stairs—eh?"

"Oh, you are too kind, too generous by far, dear uncle Simon!" said I mournfully. "Please do not trouble. You let me want for nothing; and sometimes I think you cannot perhaps afford it."

"I can afford anything for you dear. Come—say which it is to be—a new gown or a new book? I shall be passing through London on my way home, and of course I could buy a fine new gown there."

"I thought you were going to Ireland?" said I, looking up at him.

"So I am; but I shall be in London before I come back."

"Well, I am very greedy, uncle Simon dear. I would rather have a new book, since you give me the choice. I have plenty of gowns for the present. Why, nobody would see a new gown at Moor Edge if I had one! thought I. But this reflection of discontent would certainly not have occurred to me a month previously.

"I think Adelaide Procter's poems would be a nice book for your shelves, Flower—eh?" said my uncle, his hand upon the latch of the garden gate, gazing meanwhile very wistfully into my upturned eyes. "All young people—young girls especially—should read Adelaide Procter."

"Yes, I would rather have them. Good-bye, Flower—good-bye! By-the-bye, my little girl, you have not seen anything of that Mr.—what is his name?—Mr. Darkwood lately, have you?"

This was unexpected. My heart seemed to stop for seconds, then to go on again, beating fast and loud. My eyes were burning with the heat of the blood which had suddenly rushed upward to my head; but, if my uncle Simon noticed the fiery blush, he uttered no comment upon it. Heaven knows how I managed to say as carelessly as I did—

"Mr. Darkwood? Oh, dear, no! He has left the neighborhood, I should imagine, for good. I am sure I should have met him on the moor if he had not gone away."

"Now I wonder whether he really is gone away?" observed my uncle Simon thoughtfully.

"There is no doubt about it!" I cried; and I wondered drearily whether those six little words actually sounded as light and indifferent as I meant them to sound, or whether they in any wise betrayed the sense of desolation which was burthening my heart so heavily.

"You will be civil to him if—if you should happen to meet him again Flower?"

"Oh, yes, uncle dear—you said I might, you know! Just civil, and that's all, of course! But I shall not meet him again—it is not likely; and I care, not a straw—why should I?—if I don't." I knew—who better?—that it was a lie. Heaven forgive me!

"My poor little girl—my dear little girl!" muttered my uncle Simon; and the next moment he had embraced me, and was gone.

Very down-heartedly I watched him disappearing over the purple-green undulations of the moor, straight before him the low rose light of the sinking sun, Moor Edge—I standing at the gate, and aunt Hannah, with the pink wrapper held over her face, crying in the porch—fading behind him. There he went, to meet Lang the carrier, growing as he trudged onward momentarily smaller and smaller in the distance, clad in his gray suit and gray hat, the ugly bulging black bag carried in his left hand.

Upon the rising ground he turned, his back now to the sun's red glory. With his blue cotton pocket-handkerchief he waved a last farewell to me; and I fluttered my white one in return. Then he went on again; and a dip in the moorland hid him from my sight.

Oh, uncle Simon, uncle Simon, when next we meet, should we ever meet again, how will it be with you and with me? When next you come back to your lone house upon the moor, shall I be standing here at the gate of it, with loving tones and with loving touch once more to welcome you home? Oh, uncle Simon, in the near days that were coming, how could I tell that, before I should see you again, the horrid gulf that neither of us could cross would be for ever fixed between you and me?

The future is veiled from us—Heaven knows it is best so! I stared forlornly at the fast-dying sun, until a primrose mist seemed to dim the splendor of it, and I turned away.

CHAPTER IV.

Jack Sprat was barking loudly, but joyously. Aunt Hannah and I were at the back of the house, in the yard, between us doing our best to perform those duties which were the pride and the joy of uncle Simon's leisure when he was living quietly at home with us at Moor Edge.

It was perhaps about eleven o'clock in the morning, and uncle Simon had been gone two days. I was in the hen-house getting some new-laid eggs; and aunt Hannah, in the cowshed hard by, was unchaining meek Daffodil and Daisy, for it was time to send them forth for their daily ramble on the moor.

"Who in the name of fortune can it be?" my aunt called out, aware that Jack Sprat would not make such a disturbance for nothing. "Flower, you go and see; it isn't a tramp, or he'd never bark like that."

Setting down my basket among the straw on the bricks, I entered the house and went to the front door. There upon the doorstep under the porch, his pack unfastened and his cheap gay wares displayed enticingly, stood Wyse the Wanderer, as he was called. With him was his dog, the pedlar's inseparable companion, Jack's mother—a truly ancient animal—if possible, more ugly than poor Jack himself; for, though she was perhaps on the whole better bred than he, she had in her declining years lost an ear in a fight, and was fast going blind with one eye into the bargain.

Jack was as unfeignedly glad to see his mother and his old master Wyse and Wanderer as was I Flower Creedy, myself; for old Wyse's "call" was by aunt Hannah and me regarded as an event worth remembering and looking forward to. He "looked in" at Moor Edge about three times in a year, and occasionally once in every quarter.

I am unwilling to say it, but Wyse was a very dirty and a very unsavory old man—a crooked, stunted, unwashed old figure, with a battered hat scarcely fit for a scarecrow, and a filthy old red comforter twisted round his lean stubbly neck. In the winter he wore a rabbit-skin cap, with lappets tied over his ears, but in winter and in summer alike always the old red comforter. He loved it as aunt Hannah loved her knitted pink wrapper.

The interior of his pack however presented a striking and an agreeable contrast to the grimy bearer thereof; for it was neat, clean, and tastefully arranged, the goods, when he unstrapped and opened his treasure-house, being a sight—or so I then used to think—well worthy of industrious inspection.

There were laces, shoe-laces, ribbons, bottles of scent, needles and reels of cotton, babies' rattles, knitted shawls and wrappers, aunt Hannah's pink one had originally come out of Wyse's pack—boxes of stale chocolate and other sweets, writing-paper and sealing-wax, black and red, large envelopes, small envelopes, buttons, purses, beads, and children's picture-books, and many other things besides both for ornament and for use. Aunt Hannah always would have it that Wyse had long since made his fortune, and had old stockings crammed full of sovereigns hid away somewhere or other in his hovel at Bartle Heath, where he lived. This might or might not be true; but, if it was so, Wyse

certainly did not look like it.

"Oh, Wyse," cried I, "you are as welcome as the sunlight! What have you to show us to-day? Oh, what lovely things! You have more with you than ever!"—and I clasped my hands, I fear, quite childishly for my age.

From beneath the brim of his disreputable hat Wyse the Wanderer, I fancied, eyed me somewhat curiously.

"The little dog," said he, in his slow queer dialect, which I could not write down correctly if I were to try, "is lively enough, it seems, though he do go a bit lame, I'm thinking; but as for you, my lass, why, you are not looking so bonny as when I saw you last. What's been ailing with ye, Miss Flowy? Ain't you well? And where is your pretty color all gone to—eh? Tell us that?"

"Oh, I am all right!" I replied carelessly, though taken somewhat aback at the pedlar's unnecessarily free comments on my appearance. "Yes," I made haste to go on, "my dear little doggy is, as you say, Wyse, lively enough; though—though he did have an accident the other day and hurt his fore-paw. But it is nearly well now—just look at him!"

Jack Sprat and his mother were racing hither and thither among the cabbages, and he, when he did catch her, rolled her over and over in most unfilial style, though it was quite diverting for a looker-on. As Jack craftily came up with and attacked her upon the blind side, this feat was not difficult to accomplish. However, his mother appeared to enjoy his undutiful fun as thoroughly as did Jack Sprat himself.

"Yes," said the Wanderer drily, "it's plain they're glad to see each other. Animals is full of human nature, I always say, and knows and sees and thinks a sight more than we are willin' to give 'em credit for. Now, lass," said he mysteriously, eyeing me hard again, "let me ask ye whether——"

I interrupted him quickly, being uncertain, and uneasy too, as to what the cunning old Wanderer might be bent upon saying next.

"You must wait a moment; I'll call aunt Hannah; she is in the cowshed. She would never forgive me if I did not tell her immediately that you were waiting at the door."

"Hi, Miss Flowy—hide a minute! Missis Hannah will be here directly without your going for her—no hurry, lass!" I heard Wyse crying hoarsely after me.

But I had run from the dirty shrewd-eyed old man and his open pack upon the doorstep, and was in court at the back of the house, calling—

"Aunt Hannah, here—quick! Here's Wyse the Wanderer!"

My aunt needed no second invitation. She joined me at once. Her pinched faded face lighted up, her lack-lustre eyes positively glittered.

"Well, Missis Hannah," cried the stunted old man hilariously, rubbing his hands together and smacking his lips, and altogether greeting her in a very different tone from that in which he had spoken to me, "how on this bonny morning do I find you, ma'am? How has the world been a-using you, Missis Hannah, since I was here last?"

"But poorly, Wyse—but poorly!" replied aunt Hannah, with a sniff. Bending over the open pack, her eyes dwelt upon it greedily. "You've got a fine show for us to-day," said she.

"A fine show, truly," said the old man, wagging his head—"the finest of its kind for twenty miles round hereabout. But I don't boast—I don't boast!" said Wyse the Wanderer. "You pays your money, Missis Hannah, and you takes your choice; and there's no hurry, ma'am, over your bargaining. That's the beauty of it, don't you see?"

"So it is," said my aunt slowly, her eyes still gloating over the pedlar's tawdry wares—"so it is, Wyse. I can't abear being hurried."

He always politely addressed her as "Missis," having long since discerned that the title pleased her mightily. Wyse the Wanderer, in his way, I suppose, was a student of human nature.

"I ha' been telling Miss Flowy here," said the pedlar, throwing another glance towards me—a fatherly, bantering sort of glance which filled me with a sudden desire then and there to push him from the door and to shut it in his leering old face—"that she's lost her roses o' late. She has growed into a fine and promising lass within the last few months; and it's a pity the roses should fade. Missis Hannah, before they have come to full bloom, ye know."

"The weather's warm you see," said aunt Hannah mechanically. She had dropped upon her knees before the pack, and was turning everything in it upside down. "And perhaps she wanted some brimstone-and-treacle. I took a dose myself this morning."

How tiresome and fidgety she was!

"You're not slow in making up your mind, aunt," observed I, looking diligently down at the back of her head, and so avoiding old Wyse's inquiring sidelong glances. "You forget perhaps that I haven't chosen yet!"

"My purse is such a narrow one," grumbled aunt Hannah, "or, bless you, I see lots o' things I should like if I could have 'em!"

"The master is away visiting, I suppose?" suggested the pedlar civilly. "Or he——"

"Yes"—sharply and without looking up.

"Not for long, o' course?" remarked the pedlar cheerily.

"Longer than usual," snapped my aunt; and I could perceive by the movement of her scraggy neck and shoulders that she was trying to repress the shiver that had begun to creep over her.

"I heard yesterday in Stonyhampton," ventured the pedlar, "that he had gone to Ireland. Is that correct, Missis Hannah?"

"It is. And now, old Wyse," said my aunt angrily, "don't it strike you that you have asked about enough questions for once in a way?"

"No offence, ma'am—no offence, Missis Hannah!" cried the Wanderer, with a conciliatory duck of his disgraceful old hat.

She chose at last a shilling bottle of scent—I imagined as a restorative to smell at in case she should be taken with "the jumps"—some buttons, some darning-cotton, and several yards of lace; and then she made room on the door-step for me, and I bought a few yards of ribbon of a peculiar shade of dull light-blue which I thought extremely pretty, a box of the not too new chocolate, and some of the lace like aunt Hannah's. The lace was really good, for it was pillow-made by the gipsies on Dartle Heath.

"And now," said my aunt, patting her skirt, but finding nothing beneath its folds, "I must go up-stairs for my purse. Bother it! Old Wyse"—looking over her shoulder as she went—"you'd like a draught o' ale, wouldn't you?"

"Well, thanky, Missis Hannah," replied he, drawing his cuff across his unshaven jaw—his invariable answer to the invitation—"don't mind if I do."

"Flower, you draw it then," said my aunt, and disappeared on her errand up the staircase.

Her back well turned, the old man clutched my wrist, and held it tight within his own grimy claw.

"Hist," said he.

"What do you mean?" I demanded, shrinking from him.

"Miss Flowy," said Wyse, in a hoarse whisper, lest aunt Hannah, descending, should overhear him, "have you—have you ever had your fortun' told?"

"No," I answered, interested in spite of myself, "never."

"For a new half-crown, then, I'll tell it you, lass."

"You!" said I, partly in scorn, partly in amusement. "Who ever heard of an old man like you telling fortunes? Why, to begin with——"

"Yes, me," interrupted the pedlar eagerly. "I can tell 'em when I like as well and true as any old gip-mother on Dartle Heath."

"My aunt wouldn't allow it, I'm sure. I believe it would make her nervous to see it done," said I, it may be shaking my head a little longingly. "And—and, besides, Wyse, I haven't such a thing as a new half-crown, nor am I likely to have; so it's no good thinking about it."

"I dare say an old un would do just as well," said Wyse the Wanderer.

"But there's my aunt, you see," I began again. "I am certain that she——"

"S-s-s-h! Do you know where the quarry is—the little one with a cave like, and the big mossy stones strewed about?" whispered the pedlar hurriedly; for aunt Hannah's slipshod tread was heard overhead—evidently the purse was found.

"Yes—yes," was all I could say. My heart-beats were making themselves felt and my color was beginning to rise.

"I shall be there, lass, in the quarry, for the next hour or so," said the pedlar, with a nod and a leer full of mystery, "resting and taking a snack, ye know, before I go on'ard to Howden Fells. I sha'n't start Howden way, though, before the afternoon; for I must call at Garlands-on-the-Moor—the buxom lasses there are fond of gewgaws; and so please yoursilf, o' course, Miss Flowy; but don't you forget as I can tell a pretty girl her fortun' as well and true as any old gip-mother on Dartle Heath."

I gave him no answer—no settled answer—either one way or the other; but, holding my head in a rather high and disdainful manner, I vanished, jug in hand, down the cellar steps; just as aunt Hannah descended the stairs and again joined Wyse at the passage door.

It was close on twelve o'clock when the pedlar was paid and gone; and then we examined our purchases lovingly, aunt Hannah and I, after the manner of women to whom the luxury of spending money is a rare one; and very shortly afterwards we set about spreading the cloth for our early dinner.

"By half-past one Jack and I together were out on the moor, leaving aunt Hannah at home in the tidied-up kitchen, sewing by the open window.

Daffodil and Daisy were browsing within earshot of home, and lashing their ribs with their tails to scatter the teasing flies; the fowls were dusting themselves by the yard gate; in the filth of the yard the pigs were sprawling, and grunting with closed eyes under the noonday sun.

There always seemed to be a breeze upon the moorland, let the day be as warm and still as it might. I used sometimes to fancy that I could smell the brine—of course ever so faintly, ever so subtly—wafted upward from the bleak North Sea upon the sweet free wind of the moor.

I had changed my cotton gown of the morning, and had put on an old blue muslin one; I mean that it had once been blue, though there was little color left in it now. Round my neck I had tied some of the ribbon which I had bought of Wyse the Wanderer; and some of it I had twisted round the coarse yellow straw hat which shaded my eyes from the sun.

If the pedlar was going to tell my fortune, was it not as well to look my best, or at any rate as well as I knew how to make myself look? Moreover, it might both flatter and inspire the oracle to see me decked in his own gay wares.

Of course there was now no reason why I should hesitate to venture near the cavern in the quarry; for was not Mr. Darkwood gone from Garlands, so that in all likelihood I should never see him again? Next summer perhaps—who could tell?—he might return to paint upon the moor. It was just possible. Heigh-ho! Would next summer ever come?

I found the old man seated upon a stone, drowsily smoking a short black pipe, his pack and his back to the grassy cave, his pack and his dog upon the earth at his feet. Jack and his mother met again, overjoyed.

"Ha, ha," cried Wyse the Wanderer, rousing himself at sight of me, "so you've come at last, my bonny lass have you? Lucky you're in time, for I was just a-moving on."

I smiled, but said nothing; for I knew the old wretch was lying.

"Have you brought that new half-crown wi' ye?" inquired he, with a sly grin, getting on to his feet with an effort, and pocketing the short black pipe.

"No; but I've brought an old one; you said an old one would do as well," I answered brusquely.

In reality, to speak the truth, I was now half ashamed of myself for having in any wise encouraged the Wanderer. I well knew him to be a cunning old man; and now I fancied that he was laughing at me.

"Well, an old un will do," he conceded, "at a pinch."

"A good half-crown, old or new, is a half-crown," I interrupted again with some asperity. "Here"—holding out the coin—"take it; and—and now, if you like, you may tell me my fortune."

"If I like!" echoed the old man with a chuckle. "Why, what are you here for, Miss Flowy? Would it please you, I wonder, if I was to take your money and never tell you your fortun' after all? Why—— But there, there," he broke off in a sort of pitying way that was very irritating—"woman are strange cattle."

I frowned, looked beyond him, over his head. I suppose I was a "very woman," and, therefore, woman-like, was inconsistently angry with what I had brought upon myself.

"Come, come; that's right," the pedlar was saying slyly. "How smart we've made ourselves with the pretty blue ribbon, which I do declare almost matches our own bonny eyes, if the color was a bit brighter. Did you expect to meet any one else here besides poor old Wyse, my dear," inquired the Wanderer suddenly.

"No, I did not," I replied quite sharply. "Take the half-crown, or home I go this minute."

He took it at once, spat upon it, and sent it spinning into the air; and then, having deftly caught it, he dropped it into his breeches pocket.

"Give us your hand, my lass, said the pedlar.

So, not without a shiver of disgust which I did my best to hide—for Wyse the Wanderer was indeed a very unwashed old man—I put my hand, palm upwards, into the pedlar's grimy claw.

He bent his head and pretended to examine minutely my pink-lined palm.

"You're in love," said the pedlar briefly, without lifting his battered old hat so much as an inch.

I started, crimsoned violently, and tried to drag away my hand. That, however, I could not do, for the Wanderer held it too fast.

"How dare you?" I began, in much indignation.

"Pooh," said the pedlar, "I knew it, bless ye, my dear, the moment I set eyes on ye this morning. Yes, I knew the time was come, Miss Flowy, when you'd be glad to have you're fortun' told. Now let me see. You love a dark gentleman; and what's more——"

"I—I—— Oh, how dare you, you wicked old man? I——"

"Ah, I thought so," said Wyse the Wanderer unmoved, his grip tightening, however. "You love a dark gentleman, I say, and, what's more, the dark gentleman loves you. You live in mystery, and are not what you seem; but the secret, if you live long enough, will be cleared up in the end. You'll marry you're first love, that's clear, whoever he may be; but you won't know what real happiness is, my lass, until you have first tasted of real tribulation. That I don't think will kill you, though, yet it may be at the time you'll fancy it will. H'm, 'm, 'm—yes, a fair gentleman too will come across your life; but his coming, I am glad to see, will bring you nowt but good. You will live very likely to see things that will amaze you; and when you are a woman growed you'll wish you was a lass again. H'm, 'm, 'm—that's bad. But as I said before, Miss Flowy, if you can only manage to live long enough—and I don't see the line anywhere which means 'early death'—the clouds will surely break and roll away. And, though mayhap—I'm not certain about this—you'll some day be a widow, the chances are, my dear, you will die a wife. There—that's all. And I think old Wyse the Wanderer has given you your money's worth."

Before I could recover my breath—surprise, a trembling excitement, a vague confused sense of incredulity, and belief contending with each other, having for the moment robbed me of it—the Wanderer had shouldered his pack, had whistled to Jack's mother, and was trudging out of the quarry.

But on the earthy incline at the mouth of it he halted for a few seconds, seemed to be pondering something, and finally turned and came back to where I still stood, dumb and bewildered, exactly as he had left me

Certainly I felt dazed, yet angry no longer; my strange fortune had been told, and very strange indeed it appeared to me then.

"If," said the old man earnestly, with neither leer nor banter about him now, "you should never again set eyes upon Wyse the Wanderer, you'll remember, won't you, my dear, the pedlar's last words? Mark 'em well, my bonny lass, for they'll come true."

I did not reply, I was tongue-tied; and in the next minute the odd old man was gone—really gone—and I stood there in the quarry alone.

I sat down then upon a mossy hillock, and clasped my hands round my knees, my eyes fixed on space, my heart curiously chill. Jack was sniffing and scampering among the rabbit-burrows but I neither saw nor heard him.

I tried, and with tolerable success, to remember—to repeat to myself—the pedler's remarkable prophecy. "A dark gentleman—he loves you, and you love him. You live in mystery, and are not what you seem. A fair gentleman—a friend; a life of sorrow and tribulation, but joy and sunshine in the end." Oh, yes, I could remember it all pretty accurately, sad stuff as it was, and—and what an idiot was I ever to consent to listen to it, and to part too with my half-crown! Dark men or fair men were nothing to me, and—and half-crowns were by no means so plentiful at Moor Edge that I could afford so recklessly to fling them away.

With energy I roused myself; the dark man and the fair man should trouble my thoughts no longer. Common sense should help me; it is ever one's safest guide.

"The sly wretched old Wanderer!" I exclaimed aloud. "He knows, of course—I mean, he must have seen us on that day here in the quarry; and the rest he made up out of his own crafty old brain. And now I dare say he has gone on to Garlands-on-the-Moor, and will tell those big red plain Miss Acres precisely the same nonsense that he has told me. A mystery about me indeed! I am not the person I think I am! Pooh! Who, I wonder then, am I, if I am not uncle Simon's niece?"

And yet—and yet could it be possible that disreputable old Wyse the Wanderer, even he, knew more about me, in those young and careless days of mine, than I knew about myself?

"Find 'em, Jack Sprat dear—find 'em, little man!" I cried out to my companion cheerily, determined then and there to forget the fortune-telling incident, to banish it for ever from my memory. But this, albeit I lived to grow old I was never able to do. And Jack, encouraged by the tone of my voice, yapped and scratched amongst the sandy rabbit-holes with a vigor worthy of a kindlier intent.

Over the great stones and gray chalky tufts around me the periwinkle-flowers climbed and grew abundantly, their pretty blue star-like blossoms peeping coyly out from amidst their trailing dark-green leaves.

I took off my hat, and began to sing to myself. My voice though wholly uncultivated, was sweet and true. And as I sang—for I had brought no book with me, and was in a singularly idle and unsettled mood that afternoon—I gathered long sprays of the pretty periwinkle-plant and fastened them round my hat.

Some I wreathed about my throat, and tied the cool green necklet there with Wyse the Wanderer's ribbon, the delicate tint of which, I perceived, nearly matched the periwinkle-bloom; and some of the starry sprays dangling longer than their fellows I stuck in one side of the blue band at my waist; and I had still a whole handful left.

Ah me, ah me, what a child I was then. What a woman am I, with a woman's knowledge, now.

Suddenly a low menacing growl from Jack Sprat made me start. I trembled, I know not why. A sweet vague nameless joy had taken swift hold of my soul. The queer old pedlar and his forecasting of my fate were alike instantly forgotten.

"Don't move," said a well-remembered voice above me; "don't move pray. As you are now you are lovely, you are perfect. Don't stir."

But I did stir, I did look up. How could I help it?

Standing there upon the moor in the sunlight, just over the grassy mouth of the "cave," sketch-book in hand, was Daryl Darkwood.

CHAPTER V.

I CANNOT say how it came about; for minutes my confusion and surprise were overwhelming at again so unexpectedly beholding Mr. Darkwood; but ere long he was lying indolently upon the turf at my side, and having put away his sketch-book and pencil, was trifling with the periwinkle sprays in my hand.

As for me I was dumb—had not yet recovered the power of speech; and I had intended to be so distant, so indignant with him for causing the injury to Jack's fore-paw.

But then—but then, I was reflecting insensibly, Jack was now as good as well, and doubtless after all he—Mr. Darkwood—had never really meant to hurt him.

At the worst it was an accident; and so I was mute. Not, however from anger and indignation; it was sheer gladness at seeing him again which kept me frightened and dumb.

And all the while he was telling me, explaining quite simply and quietly the reason of his absence from Garlands-on-the-

Moor, and why it was lately I had not seen him at his painting out of doors.

He had, he said, been suddenly called by telegram to London, and had started forthwith for town with scarcely five minutes' preparation.

Then unforeseen delays had cropped up, and he had stayed away much longer than he had anticipated. After having traveled all night, he had got back to Garlands only on the morning of that very day.

"I did have half a mind," said he, looking hard at me I felt as he spoke, "on my journey to town, and indeed whilst there, to write to you, and explain my absence from these beautiful northern wilds. I—I thought, you see, that you would think me so rude and so unkind. But I afterwards remembered that I did not know your proper address, and also perhaps," he added vaguely, "that it would not do to write. By the way," said Mr. Darkwood earnestly, "how ought one, in writing to you, Miss Creedy, address you at that dull and lone old house of yours ?"

"I—I hardly know," I then timidly replied, venturing for the first time to meet the upward gaze of his dark clear ardent eyes, "but I should imagine that 'Moor Edge, near Stonyhampton,' would be enough. I have never had a letter in my life."

"Never ?"

He did not utter the word in any astonishment ; on the contrary, just then his tone was exceedingly thoughtful.

"Never," said I quietly.

"And how about books and magazines and newspapers ?" he asked. "Do you never see a newspaper at Moor Edge ?"

"Books—good books—I have in plenty," I told him ; "but as for newspapers and that kind of thing, oh, no, I never see them. My uncle Simon always says that the newspapers nowadays are not fit reading for girls ; and he says too that a woman who is a politician is a nuisance,a bore,and that the other things printed every day are not meant for women to read. So, when he brings home a newspaper, he generally burns it. My aunt Hannah, I believe, detests the sight of them."

"Ah !"

Mr. Darkwood sprang up so impetuously to seat himself by my side upon the great mossy tone I was sitting upon that Jack, who was not many yards away from us, immediately flew at him with white teeth ominously bared.

"Be quiet this instant ! Lie down, sir, will you ?" cried I feeling absurdly vexed with my faithful mongrel for this ill-bred display of most uncalled for temper, then little divining—how should I ?—that the dog's instinct was surer than my own. And Jack Sprat, with a growl of smothered dissatisfaction, reluctantly obeyed me.

"The little chap has taken a dislike to me, I fear," observed Mr. Darkwood airily. "Never mind ; we shall be better friends by-and-by, I hope." But, alas, they never were. "I was about to ask you," he continued more seriously, when seated quite near to me upon the convenient old stone, "whether you would mind telling me something—anything—with regard to yourself and your lonely life here ?" As yet I know so little about you; and I want to know more. Let us talk about yourself —will you ? Do believe me, I have grave reasons for asking you; it is not impertinent curiosity. The truth is, I am greatly interested in you— May I call you Flower ?" he begged, softly breaking off.

I blushed a burning red. Little in those days sufficed to make me blush.

"Would it be—would it be right ?" I stammered.

"There would be no harm in it, at any rate," he said confidently, with a smile. "And it is such a pretty name."

"Do you really like it ?"

"I never in my life heard a sweeter. Indeed I remember now that it once belonged to a dear little cousin of mine—a cousin however whom I never saw, for she died before I came to England, in an unusually tragic way. Yes, it is a lovely name, and suits you, I think, as no other could."

I drew a deep breath, and was conscious of a slight delicious tremor in my veins. I was very happy—ah, so strangely, blindly happy !—on that perfect summer afternoon. And before I was half an hour older I had actually told Mr. Darkwood everything that I could remember of my simple life—my uneventful life of nineteen years how I could recall no other existence than the one I had always lived at Moor Edge—in spring, summer, autumn, and in winter ever the same—an undisturbed record of level monotony from the end of one year to that of another; how I had never been to school, could not play and sing like the strapping loud-voiced young women at Garlands-on-the-Moor; and how I was indebted for all that I knew—which I discovered shortly afterwards was not much to boast of—to the patient tuition and the good sense of my uncle Simon himself. I could read, write, and cipher, at the same time possessing a fair knowledge of much that was best and brightest in the literature of my own country; there was my education in a nutshell.

I told Mr. Darkwood about my uncle's mysterious journeys, and how sorely he was missed by aunt Hannah and me when those times came round for him to go away from Moor Edge, and what a useful little income was made out of our garden and small farm-yard; how aunt Hannah was occasionally overtaken with "the jumps;" and how the Stonyhampton people and their children stared at us—at me and aunt Hannah—if we walked about the town on a market-day.

This and more—which I have no doubt to him sounded trivial enough, although to me it was all very real—as concisely as I could on that sweet lazy afternoon did I relate to Daryl Darkwood, who sat there by my side on the great gray stone in the quarry, idly fingering the periwinkle sprays in my lap, but listening intently to me all the same, I could see.

"And you are quite sure," said he slowly by-and-by, not now looking at me, but pulling thoughtfully at one end of his heavy swart brown moustache, "that your name, Flower, is 'Creedy'—really 'Flower Creedy' ?"

I was rather staggered at the question, at the calm manner in which it was put to me, and I could only stare for one second at the pale handsome profile of my interlocutor. Indeed I barely noticed at the time how coolly and easily he had made use of my Christian name.

"Of course," I said at last. "Why, Mr. Darkwood, what else should it be ?"

"In that case," he replied, but replying indirectly, "your father must have been the brother of Simon Creedy ?"

"I—I suppose so," was my uncertain rejoinder. "But to tell you the truth, the question has seldom, if ever, troubled me. No, I have never thought about it at all."

Yet now I did begin to feel somewhat uncomfortable. The suspicion that Mr. Darkwood had met—perhaps, for some odd reason, was in league with—Wyse the Wanderer, began to dawn far from pleasantly upon me. It was very curious and disquieting. It was altogether extraordinary.

"And your mother, Flower," continued Mr. Darkwood gently, "do you remember nothing of her ?"

"Nothing ; not even in the faintest degree. Mr. Darkwood," I said in nervous haste, determined to know the worst, "did you, I—I wonder, as you come along here, meet upon the moor a queer looking and not very clean old man, carrying a pedlar's pack, and with a dog very like Jack—in fact, his mother, only she is blind of one eye—trotting close to his heels ?"

"No, that I did not," he answered, looking up with a frank smile which spoke for itself, amused, I suppose, at my impulsive address. "What about him—this unwashed old man ?"

"Oh, nothing," said I, breathing more freely. I thought—thought that perhaps you might have met him, that is all. He is only old Wyse the Wanderer, as they call him about here. He came with his pack to our house to-day ; and—and we bought, as we always do, a few trifles of the old man ; this ribbon, for instance," touching it, "amongst the number."

So, happily, after all, it seemed that my alarm was groundless, and Mr. Darkwood then could know nothing of the folly I had been guilty of.

Oh, what would he have said, what would he have thought of me, had he caught me in the act of throwing away a good half-crown to hear my fortune told—such rubbish as it was too ?

Nevertheless, it was strange, to say the least of it, that he should have fallen to speculating as to whether or not in reality I was the niece of Simon Creedy.

"And so," said Mr. Darkwood quizzically, "you bought this ribbon of the pedlar, did you ? It is a charming color"—his eyes roving upward to my hat—"and matches the periwinkles."

I was aghast.

"What !" I exclaimed. "Do you mean to say they are still there ? How silly I must look. I declare I had forgotten, I had indeed !"

In honest disgust at my own idle vanity, I was about to raise a swift hand and to snatch off the ridiculous wreaths from my throat and my hat-brim.

But Mr. Darkwood caught my arm, crying out hastily—

"Oh, do not ! You look so pretty as you are ! I at once resolved to sketch you when I found you setting here ; but you would not remain quiet, you know. However, no matter. My eyes since then have had a goodly feast,and can very well paint you from memory."

I could only blush again, well pleased. I could find no words in which to answer him, to thank him for his praise.

"And, Flower," he went on with a kind of tender authority in his voice, and in his manner, "we must talk more of this, if you do not mind. I mean about yourself and—and the parents you have never known. As I said a minute ago, I am interested in you—interested deeply. You must learn to trust me, Flower."

I was silent, vaguely troubled. What could he mean ? Was I not content to be uncle Simon's niece ? Surely I wanted to be no one else.

"And you do trust me, Flower ?" said Mr. Darkwood earnestly, taking my hand into his.

"Yes ; I trust you," I answered simply —perhaps a little sadly also.

His clasp tightened around my fingers.

"Your—your uncle is away, I know," he said more rapidly ; "the Acre people told me that he is gone to Ireland. So could you not—could you not in his absence, persuade your aunt to invite me to Moor Edge ? I should so much like to see the interior of that grim-looking old gray abode of yours. Tell her that I am a painter, and your friend, in search of the picturesque."

Here, recollecting aunt Hannah's unflattering opinion of all young men, I was obliged to laugh. Mr. Darkwood ceased to speak, and looked inquiringly into my eyes.

"What amuses you ?" smiled he.

"That funny idea about getting aunt Hannah to invite you to the house," I replied. "Ah, you do not know her."

"You believe that it would be vain to ask her ?"

"I am quite sure that it would. Now uncle Simon himself might do it—I am not certain about him—if he were at home ; but then, you see—"

Mr. Darkwood shook his head, frowning thoughtfully.

"No, no, no," he muttered, more to himself than to me ; it must be done, and done promptly, if done at all, before he returns home."

I glanced wonderingly at my companion, now wholly failing to comprehend him.

"When will your—your uncle Simon come back to Moor Edge ?" inquired Mr. Darkwood abruptly. "Flower, can you tell me that ?"

I explained to Mr. Darkwood that uncle Simon had been gone two days, and that in all probability he would be back with us in about a week, as his stay this time was to be a longer one than customary.

"Ah," he quickly ; "there's a clear week then."

His dark eyes appeared to glow with sudden passionate feeling; the red-brown light in them flashed out. I felt his arm gently touching my waist; his searching eloquent gaze seemed to thrill me through and through.

"If you will not invite me to the house, Flower, you must meet me out here again upon the moor as early as possible," he whispered half sternly, half playfully. "I have more to say to you, and it shall be said. You trust me; you have confessed it; and—and well you must obey me."

"But anyhow I must go now," I faltered, hardly conscious of what I said—"indeed, indeed I must;" and I rose uncertainly to my feet, feeling, in truth, rather faint.

Actually the fast-westering sun was dropping to the fringe of the moor; its glorious undulations were taking rainbow hues beneath the low spreading fiery light. The solemn rooks, in dusky battalions, were travelling slowly homeward to the woods of Stonyhampton.

"Jack, Jack," cried I, with I fear, poorly-assumed ease, "we are going home, like the rooks, little man ! Come along—say good-bye to the rabbits, Jack !"

But, as Daryl Darkwood still held my ungloved hand, I was unable to make a start.

"Flower," he said, "you must let me see you again soon—to-morrow—do you hear ? Promise—or I shall not release you."

"Well, I—I promise," I whispered.

"And now, Flower, you must grant me something else."

"What is that ?"

"Something very simple—a kiss."

"You have—you have my hand in yours, Mr. Darkwood," I answered tremulously. "If you like, you—you may kiss that."

"Periwinkle; it is not enough," said he emphatically; then he added softly, "Periwinkle—the blue periwinkle that so charmingly becomes you—means 'early friendship;' and how apt is a quick friendship to ripen into a speedy love !"

Without other preamble or ado, he raised his hat, bent down, and then and there kissed me upon the lips.

"I love you, my beautiful Flower !" he said.

My hand was free. I turned from him and fled, Jack Sprat racing on ahead of me, joyously yapping at space. My cheeks and brow, I knew well enough, were scarlet; my eyes tingled with unshed tears. But for all that the heart within me was feather-light, and I laughed for very gladness as I ran. Away, away with all anxiety and misgiving ! On our side of gaunt Howden Fells, at least, I believe that I was the happiest soul alive.

Ah me for the wild freshness of youth's bright morning, when that first freshness of life and of life's possibilities has for ever gone from us, and left us sad and wise !

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SANDY AND THE KITTENS.—Sandy was a shepherd dog, one of which any master might be proud—so quick, bright, and cunning in getting off the tricks that were taught him. Sandy and the Maltese cat were great friends. One day Tabby brought into the house three young kittens whose eyes were just opened.

Sandy enjoyed taking them up by the neck in his mouth, and shaking them gently, and playing with them as the mother cat did; and he was laughed at and encouraged by the members of the family.

After a little, Sandy's master went away, and was gone about three weeks. When he returned, Sandy met him at the gate with sundry canine manifestations of joy.

"What about the kittens, Sandy ?" asked his master.

Immediately the dog's happy look changed to one of shame and sorrow. He dropped his head and went slinking off, with his tail between his legs.

His master saw no more of him that day, and at night, inquiring for him, was told that he was out by the wood-pile, lying ill.

Then it came out that Sandy had killed all the kittens.

It seems, as they grew older, they did not like his familiar ways, and they would scratch him; and one after another, as they did this, he bit them and despatched them, and they were buried in the garden under one of the apple trees.

When Sandy found that he was not to be punished for his wrong-doing he recovered, and was soon his old frolicsome self.

If a little boy had acted something as Sandy did we should have said he was suffering the pangs of a troubled conscience. But how about the dog ? What do you think ? Have dogs any conscience ?

Bric-a-Brac.

HER NAME.—In Cuba a women never loses her maiden name. After marriage she adds her husband's name to her own. In being spoken of she is always called by her Christian and maiden names. To a stranger it is often quite a task to find out whose wife a women is. Never hearing the wife called by the husband's name, one naturally does not associate them together. The children take the names of both parents, but place the mother's name after the father's.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE.—There is given an interesting account of the origin of the plan of the Crystal Palace, used for the first World's Exhibition in London, England, in 1851. Mr. Paxton, a gardener, having noticed the structure of the great leaves of the "Victoria regia," a plant which had been introduced into England a few years previously, struck the plan of copying in iron the ribs of the leaf, and filling the remaining space, which corresponds to the cellular portions of the leaf, with glass. Thus by copying nature an obscure gardener became Sir Joseph Paxton, the great architect.

PULLING TEETH.—The Japanese dentist does not frighten his patients with an array of steel instruments. All of his operations in tooth drawing are performed by the thumb and forefinger of the one hand. The skill necessary to do this is only acquired after long practice, but once it is obtained, the operator is able to extract half a dozen teeth in about thirty seconds without once removing his fingers from the patient's mouth. The dentist's education commences with the pulling out of pegs which have been pressed into soft wood ; it ends with the drawing of hard pegs which have been driven into an oak plank with a mallet.

PERFUMERY.—A word about the materials used in perfumery. The animal series comprises musk, civet and ambergris. Musk is a secretion of a deer ; civet is the secretion of a cat ; ambergris is the diseased portion of a whale. Musk varies in price from $6 to $12.50 ; civet from $5 to $7.50 ; ambergris from from $2.50 to $12.50 an ounce. The floral series includes the jasmine, rose, orange, tuberose, cassia, violet, jonquil and narcissus. The herbal series includes all aromatic plants, such as lavender, spike, peppermint, rosemary, thyme, marjoram, geranium,patchouli and wintergreen.

SEINE LAUNDRIES.—In Paris there are hundreds of floating laundries moored in the Seine. All the soiled linen of the great city is washed in them. The largest of these floating laundries consists of twelve houses in two parallel lines, built upon as many flat-boats. They are connected with each other by gangways, and form a frontage of three hundred and fifty feet, with streets in every direction and spaces at various points where washerwomen meet to gossip and transact business. All the families of these Seine laundries are united by ties of interest and marriage. The daughters of proprietors get as dowry a flat-boat, and generally wed sons of those in the same calling.

MICE AND FROGS.—That frogs have a formidable enemy in the common mouse is evidenced by the following incident. A correspondent states that he observed, a short time since, several mice pursuing some frogs in a shed which was overrun with these reptiles. The alacrity of the latter however rendered the attacks of the mice futile for a considerable period. Again and again the frogs escaped from the clutches of their foes, but only to be recaptured, severely shaken, and bitten. The energy put forth by these reptiles was so great that they actually swayed their captors to and fro in their efforts to wrest themselves from their grasp. At length the wounds inflicted upon them rendered the frogs incapable of further resistance, and they were easily overpowed by the mice, which devoured a part of them.

CEREMONY.—Barbarous nations frequently imprint on their salutations the dispositions of their character. When the ancient inhabitants of Carmena, in Asia, would show a peculiar mark of esteem, they breathed a vein, and presented for the beverage of their friend the blood as it issued. The Franks tore the hair from their head, and presented it to the person they saluted. The slave cut his hair, and offered it to his master. The Chinese are singularly affected in their personal civilities. They even calculate the number of their reverences. These are the most remarkable postures. The men move their hands in an affectionate manner, while they are joined together on the breast, and bow their heads a little. If they respect a person, they raise their hands joined, and then lower them to the earth in bending the body. If two persons meet after a long separation, they both fall on their knees and bend their face to the earth, and this ceremony they repeat two or three times.

A MEMBER of the Texas legislature engaged the services of a colored man named Jake. It was not long before the legislator had occasion to remark, "Jack, it's very singular that I miss so many of my cigars." "Kurnel, yer reckerlects dat I told yer when yer first hired me dat I smoked, and you said I mustn't smoke in de house?" "But, great Cæsar, you didn't suppose I gave you permission to smoke my cigars ?" "Whose cigars did you reckon I'd smoke, Didn't 'spose, did yer, dat I ask permishun ter smoke my own cigars ?"

PARTING TIME.

BY E. F.

Low burned the fire; the room was dim;
We heard the warning clock strike eight—
And by the message, stern and grim,
Knew that I ought no more to wait.

"I had a dream last night," I said;
"I'll tell it to you ere I go;
I thought, my dear, your little head
Was lying on my shoulder—so.

"'"'Tis time to go,' I said, and you—
You kissed me twice upon my cheek;
Now, tell me, love, do dreams come true?"
How archly did my darling speak!

"Why, some come true and some do not;
In dreams like this I quite believe;"
And then she kissed me twice, and got
Her waist entangled with my sleeve.

Why is it that to say good-night
Must take so long a time? I know
When lips are sweet and eyes are bright
One can but linger, loath to go.

And, somehow, ere I went away
That night, the clock had struck eleven—
So long, it takes, you see, to say
What seems an easy task at seven.

LIGHT AT LAST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BROKEN WEDDING RING," "THORNS AND BLOSSOMS," "WHICH LOVED HIM BEST?" ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

"YOU must not make sure of our happiness," she whispered presently—"not too sure! There are things which might separate us."

"What things?" he asked quickly. "Can anything divide our lives, since we love each other? Oh, my darling, you spoke as if there was some real obstacle to our marriage! Your father would not object after a time, surely?"

"No, no; I did not mean that," she whispered. "But Dick and I have been very much troubled lately. We both think that—that—there is some family secret which we have never been told—something that it is necessary to keep hidden. If there is then, Neville, that would separate us."

"It should not, dearest," he said, holding her still closer.

"Yes—I would never marry you then," she slowly murmured; and there was a quiet determination in her voice which alarmed him.

"Mabel, my darling, you frighten me!" he said. "No family secret shall separate us."

It was not a well-chosen moment for two lovers to whisper confidences, for suddenly a light played across their sequestered path, the whole grounds were illuminated with colored rays, and a gay group at a little distance discerned the pair.

Lord Wynmore had only time to whisper—

"I shall be with you early to-morrow, darling," when they drew near.

There was no opportunity for more tender speeches.

Lord Wynmore's attention was claimed by half a dozen people.

"Lady Effington begged us to find you," said one.

"The Duchess is going," remarked another.

With great reluctance the young fellow obeyed the call. He hastened to consign Mabel to her uncle's care, saying as he did so—

"Let me find you for a moment presently, Mr. Carlford. I will put the Duchess into her carriage, and return immediately."

Mr. Charlford uttered a very gracious reply. He had chiefly occupied his time in observing his host's demeanor towards his niece.

"It will be a fait accompli in no time!" he thought; aloud he said quite amiably, "Mabel, my dear, shall I find a seat for you? You look tired."

* * * * *

Exultation filled the heart of Mabel's uncle as he leaned back in the carriage which was conveying him and his niece and nephew from the Manor.

The great catch of the season, Viscount Wynmore, had been taken in the net of a mere schoolgirl, who had not even aimed at conquest, who had not yet been introduced into society.

Lord Wynmore had only said, as he shook hands with his departing guest—

"Will you permit me to call at the Court early to-morrow—if I rode over to breakfast, for instance?"—and he had managed to add, aside, "Mr. Charlford, I have told your niece that I can never love any one but herself."

There was no fear of any scolding for Mab that night.

Her uncle would almost have made Dick a present of the box of flies had he at that time been asked to do so.

"I shall telegraph to Richard early in the morning," Mr. Charlford said to himself—by "Richard" meaning Mab's father.

Meanwhile the chief person concerned, Mab herself, was leaning back in the carriage absorbed in a delicious reverie.

A heavenly joy was in her heart—a rapture not of earth; but mingled with it also was terrible voiceless fear.

How would she dare to accept the happiness which was held out to her? How would she venture to say, "I am yours, Neville," till all the strange doubts that she and Dick had been tortured with lately had been fully cleared away?

Neville would come to her on the morrow, but what could she say to him? This was the jarring chord in her heavenly music.

"Mab, you are very tired, I know, or you would never have been so silent all the way back," said Dick, running after her as she went upstairs when she had uttered a brief good night to her uncle; and then he saw that she was in tears. "What is it?" asked her brother, in much concern.

"It is—oh, Dick—it is that Lord Wynmore has asked me to marry him!" she whispered, suddenly throwing her arms round Dick's neck, and hiding her face on his shoulder.

"Mab, you can't mean it!" cried Dick, electrified.

"It is true enough, Dick," said Mab, checking her weeping.

"You would never marry him, nice fellow as he is, if you did not care for him. Are you afraid that you will be persecuted into it? But you never shall be! I will stand by you!" cried Dick resolutely.

"Oh, Dick, it is not that!" she faltered. "I do love him better than all the world; but how can I consent to any engagement with this dreadful thing about father hanging over me?"

Dick started; for the moment he had forgotten the dreaded secret.

"And Lord Wynmore will be here early to-morrow," gasped Mab.

"Tell him the truth—tell him that there is something you do not understand yet," said Dick hurriedly, in a whisper, for their uncle's voice was audible below in the hall, saying to the hall-porter—

"You will see that this telegram goes to Mr. Charlford the very first thing in the morning, Bailey. Let one of the grooms ride over to Wroughton."

"Yes, sir," replied the man.

Dick and Mab exchanged glances; words they could not utter, for already their uncle's foot was on the staircase.

Ah, could either the brother or sister have discerned the thoughts which filled his mind, what a startling disclosure would have followed, and Mab would have hesitated no longer as to her course of action! As it was, she crept softly into her own room, saying to herself in a delirium of rapture which would not be repressed—

"He loves me—he loves me!"

Brightly the summer stars looked down upon the agitated girl, so supremely blest, yet so full of unrest; and the pearly dawn found her yet waking, transported with the recollection of her wonderful happiness.

Then up rose the sun, showering his radiance over flower and forest; and with his coming every living thing seemed wakened to greet his return.

Flowers flung their scent abroad, birds sang rejoicingly, butterflies opened their gorgeous wings; the bright morning, like a new life, beamed over the earth.

And a new life had begun for Mabel also. With the new day came her suitor. She had no time to prepare to greet him, for when she entered the breakfast-room he was already there, talking to her uncle, who was all smiles and graciousness this morning.

And Lord Wynmore? Mabel's swift and timid glance met such a look of deepest joy, such an assurance of irrepressible happiness, that her own heart thrilled with the certainty that her presence transformed life for him.

Unwonted harmony reigned at the morning meal; and, though only ordinary topics were discussed, and Mab listened instead of talking, an undercurrent of joy seemed to pervade the group.

Mab sat by Neville's side as if she were in dreamland rather than on the cold prosaic earth.

It was as if all of a sudden she had been taken into a place from which all cares and troubles were removed, and where love struck chords of joy in her heart.

Only stern reason told her that her dream could not last much longer—that at any moment it might be dispelled. But Neville's love could not be swept away; that would remain—only she would not dare to accept it.

"Won't you come into the garden?" said Neville, in a low voice, as they rose from the table.

Ah, how she loved him! Truly love grows quickly in the young hearts attuned to each other.

"Are you not happy, darling?" he whispered, drawing her towards him when they reached the hall.

"Oh, more than happy, Neville," she answered, her beautiful young face transfigured by the devotion that she felt. "But remember what I hinted to you last night—there may be something to separate us."

"Nothing can separate us if you love me, Mabel! And you do love me a little, don't you?" he asked, in tones made musical by the joy which thrilled through them.

And Mabel faltered in mingled pain and rapture—

"Perhaps you will never know how much."

"Oh, Mab—my Mab," he whispered—"the world was empty till I found you! Come out among the roses; I have something to give you that you must keep for my sake."

And then, hand-in-hand, like boy and girl, they went out together into the sunlit garden, and away into cool shades and green by-paths.

The bees hummed on their busy way, and the birds sang, while a warm delicious fragrance was breathed around. Cool shadows, too, lay aslant over the lawn and across the glades of the park beyond; the long pool glittered in the sunlight; nor was there a possibility that uncle John would suddenly appear to snatch his niece from the bliss that transported her.

There was no fear of that now; the way to greatness was to be made very easy for Mab. No hand save her own was to intervene to push it from her.

But neither the scent of flowers, the summer glory, nor the presence of her beloved himself could make her quite forget that the unexplained and hidden thing against which her foot had stumbled in the dark, as it were, might yet rise into gigantic proportions and shut out all the radiance.

"Let us sit down here, darling," murmured her lover, when they had reached a shady seat in the shrubbery.

It was a secluded spot, meet for two lovers newly betrothed.

And for a few fleeting moments, sitting by each other's side, his hand clasping hers his voice telling her in low musical tones how dear she was to him, Mabel did forget that anything could divide them, so overpoweringly rapturous was her joy in the consciousness that she had won his love. She was soon to remember it again however.

Lord Wynmore took her hand in a more tender clasp, saying—

"Will you promise to wear this, my darling, as a pledge that you and I belong to each other?"—and he essayed to encircle her finger with a ring of large pearls. "It is an heirloom in our family," he added. "I shall begin to love even the senseless pearls when I see them on your dear hand."

But she drew back.

"Why not, dearest? Are you not mine now, and am not I yours?" he rejoined fondly. "Mabel, you never mean to send me away from you now? Why do you refuse to wear our betrothal ring?"

"I will make sure that you will never have reason to regret placing it on my finger, Neville, before I let you put it on," she answered, sighing gently.

"What—you are still thinking of possible separation—and all for a baseless dream! Give me that dear hand; I shall feel more sure of you when once you have my ring on," he murmured.

"No," she said softly, but resolutely—"no, Neville; I must be sure of certain things before I dare to let you give me such a pledge of our betrothal. I must not let happiness blind me to what is right."

"My darling Mab, I do not understand your fear. What shall I say to it? How shall I show you that it is baseless? For I am certain that it is so. Yes—certain!" he repeated with confidence.

"No one can convince me of that but my father; he will soon be here now," said Mab dejectedly.

How many tender caresses, how many impassioned words he lavished upon her in order to woo her back to joy! She smiled at him with all the enchantment of loveliness which had first enthralled him; he saw the rapture in her shy eyes when his gaze met hers—but she would not accept the pearl ring.

"Not till I can wear it in assured joy," she whispered to his pleading.

For all that, he and she did not return to the house till the sound of the gong warned them that it was the luncheon hour.

At the door Mr. John Charlford met them with the intelligence that he had just received a telegram from Mab's father to say that he would be with them the next day.

CHAPTER XV.

THE morrow had come, the day when Mr. Richard Charlford was to return. Everybody at the Court was in a state of unusual excitement—even Caroline seemed to be partially roused from her indifference.

The news of the week had startled servants, friends, and neighbors—Mr. Charlford was expected home immediately, and his young daughter Mabel was engaged to be married to Viscount Wynmore.

There was no need to announce the engagement, for it was done by rumor in an incredibly short time, so that long before Mabel's father actually arrived every one, from highest to lowest, was whispering that "it would be a splendid match."

And yet Mabel had refused to allow the betrothal-ring to be placed on her finger until she had seen her father and received an explanation of the hidden mystery. But he would soon be here now.

The carriage, with uncle John, had driven to the station to meet him. Dick had offered to go too, but uncle John had negatived it.

"I am sure I hear the carriage, Dick!" exclaimed Mabel, in a distressed voice, as she went for the fifth time to the hall door.

"Never mind if it is the carriage, Mab," said Dick cheerily. "Why need you care for anything now? In another year somebody will take you away from all scoldings; and it will be very dull without you."

"You know, Dick," she remarked, a blush crimsoning her fair face, "I cannot possibly indulge any hope yet. If father refuses to explain matters, I must give up my happiness. Oh, I do so dread asking him!"

"Don't brood over it, Mab. And you and I are to go to father together, you know. I will be spokesman if you like; and it strikes me he will not be too hard on you now that your prospects are so altered. Uncle John is another man, so far as his behavior to us is concerned. Oh, dear Mab, make quite sure that there is something wrong before you refuse such happiness!"

"I am afraid that I am quite sure, now, Dick. But you may be certain I will persuade father to tell us the truth if I can. Ah, here is the carriage at last! Well, it is better to get it over."

"Yes, to be sure!" rejoined Dick. "Every disagreeable thing is best got over quickly. Cheer up, Mab—father will be afraid to scold you much now! Come along outside—the meeting there will be less formal."

They went out. The carriage was quite near now, and Mr. Charlford could be distinguished waving his handkerchief in token of greeting.

"I never remember him doing that before," said Dick aside to Mab.

Mab clasped one of her brother's hands and shivered. How was it that she always felt the strange unnatural repugnance to meet her father after any of his absences?

Nor did Dick and Caroline attempt to disguise from themselves that they dreaded this home-coming of their father's. All the same they must greet him with some show of affection, and hide their repugnance as best they might.

The carriage drew up. Mr. Charlford jumped out, and at once went up to his younger daughter, bent down, and kissed her forehead.

"Uncle John's telegram brought me great news," he said smiling. "My darling Mabel, let me wish you all manner of happiness! Lord Wynmore will see me to-morrow, but of course it is virtually settled now. You are a very fortunate girl, my dear, and we shall be very proud of you."

"Thank you father," she replied almost inaudibly, though she tried to assume a resolute air; "but I do not know yet if I may accept such happiness."

"Not accept it!" exclaimed her father, with a smile. "Oh, you mean that you are too young just at present! True—it will be quite time enough to marry when you are eighteen; and indeed I should not let you think of it before."

"I did not mean that, father," she murmured, repressing a shudder; but he had turned aside to say "How do you do?" in a more formal fashion to his son and to his eldest daughter; and soon, owing to Caroline's talent for keeping up some sort of conversation, which she could always do on necessity, and also to Dick's forcing himself to ask his father questions about his journey and about Frankfort, Mabel had time partially to recover herself. Happily for her, the bell shortly afterwards rang for dinner, and she escaped to her own room.

The tedious evening at length wore away, and Mab found herself exchanging the usual good night with her father.

Hurriedly nerving herself, she added tremulously—

"Father, you will let me speak to you early to-morrow, won't you—Dick and me?"

"Certaidly, my dear," he answered a little stiffly—"certainly; but what has Dick to do with it?"

"Almost as much as I," she replied, with difficulty restraining her tears.

"Well, I do not understand it, I confess, my dear; but of course Dick may say anything he pleases and hear anything we say. So good night, and pleasant dreams of the Manor!"

"Oh, father, do not talk of that yet!" she cried, as if struck with some sudden fear.

Mr. John Charlford, seemingly engrossed with a book at the other end of the room, pretended not to hear this, while Caroline had retired a few minutes before.

"I told you he would be completely altered towards you, Mab," whispered Dick, as he and she went upstairs together. "He is almost civil to me!"

"Ah, Dick," faltered Mab, allowing her tears to fall, "I feel as if I should never marry Neville."

"Don't say that," rejoined her brother quickly; and in the very haste of his reply she saw that he had fears which he could not lightly put aside.

It was a fair summer night, with sweet odors in the air and a delightful temperature.

Mab passed the hours, mostly walking, by her window; the silence and the aspect of the night soothed her.

But soon the morning glory irradiated the earth; a new day had begun, and with it Mab's anxieties returned with a force which was overwhelming, for that day would decide whether she dared wed Neville or not.

"Whatever I suffer, I will not drag him into it. If there is disgrace, I will bear it alone," she thought as she went into the breakfast-room.

Her father was already there, reading his letters, but he looked up, smiling, as she entered, to say—

"Well, Mabel, I have heard from Lord Wynmore. He will join us at luncheon: it seems you laid your commands upon him not to arrive earlier in the day."

"Yes, father," she answered gravely; "I do not want to see him again until—until I have talked to you."

"You are a good girl—that is just as well," he rejoined lightly. "Come—eat something—brace yourself for the coming ordeal. What will Lord Wynmore say if he sees you looking so woe-begone?"

"Neville must not expect to see me quite happy," she faltered, blushing.

"Neville? Oh, ah, he will not be Lord Wynmore to any of us any more, I suppose, but Neville Wynmore! Fortunate Mabel! The whole country will envy you. Here, I must insist on your eating this morsel of fish, and on your trying to be more cheerful. No doubt your change of prospects is a little overwhelming, but, believe me, you have no cause to shrink from the sunny

path stretching out before you."

At that moment uncle John, followed by Caroline and Dick, came in.

Directly the meal was over Mr. Charlford rose briskly, and, turning to his younger daughter, said, with a smile—

"Now, Mab! Dick, you are to come too, I believe!"—and he led the way to the library, which was empty. "Now, then, what is it, my dear? Sit down in that comfortable chair, and tell me as briefly as you can, for I perceive that it is something which annoys or pains you."

"Father," cried Mab, going forward, her voice full of passionate grief, "uncle John must have told you already."

"My dear, uncle John is far too wise a man to take other people's concerns upon his shoulders. He has left you to acquaint me with the matter, whatever it may be. Come—speak out; it will not take long in the telling!"

Dick and Mab exchanged a hasty troubled glance.

They each felt assured that uncle John had not been silent, and this beginning did not increase their trust with respect to the answer they might obtain from their father concerning his presence in the boat-house.

With a sinking heart Mab began to speak; but Dick stopped her.

"Let me explain, Mab; you can listen. Father, the fact of the matter is this—and circumstances compelled us to own the truth to uncle John—a night or two after you started for Frankfort, Mab went down to the boat-house to bring in a box of flies belonging to my uncle. It was late—past ten o'clock; and when Mabel heard voices in the boat-house she was alarmed, and crouched out of sight. Oh, father, need I go on? She saw you there with a man who spoke to you, calling you by another name, addressing you as 'Filton.' Why was it, father? For you were in disguise; and you crept away as if fearing lest any one should see you. Is there any disgrace connected with our family? That is what Mabel wishes to know; for, if so, she would die rather than marry Neville Wynmore, much as she loves him. That is what we want you to explain, father. Perhaps what happened took place long ago, and you had nothing to do with it. Let us trust you—trust to us, tell us the truth, and, if it is anything which had better come before the world, you shall see we can be silent. But don't hide it from us, for Mabel cannot allow her engagement to be announced until she is assured that she may accept Neville Wynmore's hand without fear. We have not spoken of this to Caroline, so you see you may have confidence in us, father."

Mr. Charlford had been silent all this time, regarding Dick as if with the utmost amazement.

Now he exclaimed, in a tone of dazed wonder—

"My dear children, forgive my bewilderment! Really it is excusable in the circumstances! What have you two been running your heads against? If I understand you, it is this. Mabel went, in a very frightened mood, late at night—by stealth, I suppose—down to the boat-house. Arrived there, she heard, and afterwards saw, two men who talked to each other, and one of them called the other, whom she imagined to be myself, 'Filton.' On such grounds is it possible that you, Mabel, think seriously of giving up your whole life's happiness and of charging me, your own father, with some unknown guilty deed? I will not speak of my own painful feelings at being estimated in such a manner by my own children; I will only point out the absurdity of your accusation. I was near Frankfort at the time you name: I know no stranger who would dare to speak to me in the way you mention, nor have I any reason for acting in the extraordinary fashion you describe. The likeness to myself which struck you in this stranger exists either in your own imagination, heightened as it was by fear, or there is another possible explanation of it. These men were probably bent on no good object. They were prowling about your uncle's premises—that is pretty clear. Well, they wished to do so with security, and one of them personated me. They may have been lurking about to steal the young pheasants or the poultry, and they hoped doubtless to walk about unquestioned by the gamekeepers through one of them being got up to look like myself. That is the only explanation of the affair that I can give you—and I am as anxious to obtain one as you yourselves can be. But even you admit that this man was addressed by the others as 'Filton,' or some such name; that shows that his companion used the fellow's real name, not dreaming that any one was within hearing."

"But, father," cried Mabel, breaking silence, "I heard you speak! Could I mistake your voice? And, besides, I overheard that other man address you as 'Charlford' also. And then you asked if he was not mad to use that name, and he laughed—laughed horribly! Then you came out of the boat-house and slunk away!"

"Why, Mabel, do you still seriously connect me with those persons? I shall begin to think that terror unhinged your mind for the time. But I cannot unfortunately lay my hand on the men, and prove to you that there is no sort of connection between us. You may be sure however that your uncle will give strict orders to his keepers to maintain a sharp watch at night for some time to come. This accounts for several things about the premises having been missed."

"Father, you have not heard all!" said Dick, coming forward. "Mabel found a box, which on opening was found to be full of letters—apparently in your handwriting—written years and years ago, all signed 'Filton,' all written from abroad; and allusion to us, each by name, is made in one of them. The dates of our birth, the date of my mother's marriage and her Christian names, are written in detail, with a line underneath to the effect that 'there must be no mistake.' What does it mean?"

"You make me gasp for breath, Dick!" said Mr. Charlford, as if overcome by amazement. "May I see the letters? I assure you I know nothing about them. The man Filton does, no doubt; but then he and I are two widely different persons. However, perhaps you will favor me with a sight of the documents?"

"Certainly, father. I wish you to examine them," returned Dick gravely.

"I feel confident the resemblance to my handwriting has no more foundation than my identity with the man Filton," said Mr. Charlford severely. "Well, is there any other accusation you have to bring against me?"

"There is something else to tell you of, father!" exclaimed Mabel. "Look at this paper which Dick picked up in the boat!" and she held out towards him the small square piece of paper on which were written the four names "Branley," "Joyne," "Bushel," "Froyle," with the mysterous line beneath — "Revenge, if not success!"

Mr. Charlford examined it carefully with a very grave face.

"Upon my word, there must be a nice gang of fellows prowling about!" he remarked. "I shudder to think of the danger you were exposed to, Mabel! Do you seriously believe that I, a wealthy man and a person of some position, could assist the schemes of a set of Fenians or housebreakers?"

"No, father, not that!" cried Mabel and Dick together.

"Then what can I have to do with them? If my word is not sufficient, I am ready to make oath before you, now and here, that I have not the remotest knowledge of the men named on this paper. In fact, I am altogether ignorant of its meaning. Do you or do you not believe me?"

There was such a ring of truth in what he now averred that both Mabel and Dick assured their father that they were convinced on that point.

Indeed Dick was beginning to give way on the other point too.

He was inclined to think that Mab had been thoroughly frightened, and had imagined the resemblance which had made both so miserable.

Mr. Charlford, who was watching them narrowly, was quick to perceive the change in Dick's face; he saw however that Mab was not yet convinced.

"I am very much concerned at your distress," he resumed, "because I can feel that it is genuine, but I also think that something of ordinary trust in me ought to be shown by you. I have not been a father who has lived all his life apart from you. Since Dick and you all were mere babies, that is since my enforced journey to the West Indies, when I was detained there for a year by my own illness and my cousin's death, I have been mostly at home. Surely nothing in my daily life among you has caused you to think that I was a companion of thieves or worse?"

"Oh, no, father," they again exclaimed simultaneously.

"Well, then, surely your fears are at rest—eh, Mabel?"

"Father, do forgive me, but I cannot say 'Yes.' I know," she added earnestly, "that you would not associate with bad people, we never thought that, but I do know your voice, and I know too that there is a secret. Yes; I must tell you all. A little while ago, in the library at home, when I was sitting there one day behind the curtains with a book, you and uncle John came in; and I heard you say to him that there was a secret, something that we were not to know. When all these other things happened, I connected it with them, I could not help it. And now, father—now, when Neville has asked me to marry him, it seems frightful to let him think himself engaged to me if there is any dark secret mixed up with our family history."

Mr. Charlford listened with a slight smile.

"My dear Mabel," he said, "you are very young, and you have all that delicate care for one you love which your dear mother possessed in such a marked degree. I ought not to be displeased that it is such a feature in your character, though in this instance it has told against me. Well, I forget the particular occurrance you allude to, but I do fully remember speaking to your uncle John, in the library at home, on more than one occasion too, about a circumstance which has annoyed and troubled me a good deal, and which I certainly never intended either you or even Dick to hear of. It grieves me to mention it now, but, after all you have been imagining and suffering, I am constrained to tell you plainly. You remember that woman Farley who lives in the cottage just outside our park gates, and to whom you, Mabel, were always going with some gift or other?"

"Yes, father," answered the girl.

"You may remember too that I forbade you to go to the house any more, or to give her money or anything else, for which I am sure that you thought me very tyrannical?"

"Yes, father," she faltered.

"Well, my veto was not uttered from a tyrannical motive, but because of the knowledge that she, the mother of eight children, was behaving very badly indeed, very disgracefully. She has now run off with the village carpenter, leaving her husband to shift for himself and his eight boys and girls as best he can. And, as if this scandal was not sufficient, Mrs. Farley's eldest girl not yet sixteen, has gone off with a married man who has two children. I am sorry enough to have had to mention such a subject to you, Mabel, and to have shocked your delicacy as I have done, but you left me no alternative. Well, what will you do? There is really nothing more that I can say. But there is a thing which I must do. If you yourself do not tell Lord Wynmore all this, I must. On no account would I allow a daughter of mine to form any alliance, no matter with whom, unless it was warmly desired. We will have no concealments from Lord Wynmore, and then there can be no reproaches afterwards."

Mabel heaved a deep sigh, and remained lost in thought.

"It was your voice I heard, father," she said, raising her head; "but of course underhand dealings with people of no character would be abhorrent to you; still I thought that something disgraceful, something which happened long ago, and with which you might have nothing to do—clung to our family name."

"And you are not yet convinced to the contrary? Well, Dick, is your opinion unchanged?"

"No, father. I ought to tell both you and Mabel that I think it very possible she has made a mistake. At the same time there was a good deal of foundation for the mistake. Probably some one did personate you for his own safety. Perhaps those men had a plan for robbing uncle John's house, or, as you have said, Mab, who was very much agitated, may have fancied that one of them resembled you. Again, the resemblance may have been real enough, but of course a chance resemblance. Mab dear, I wish you could think as I do."

When she heard Dick reason thus, she wavered for the first time in her own firm conviction that it had been her father, and no other, whom she had encountered by the pool; and her heart was lightened of a load that was almost too heavy for her to bear.

"Come, I see you do not look so utterly woe-begone as you did when you began this talk with me, my dear," said her father, rising. "Let me advise you now to go into the garden and get a little air before Lord Wynmore appears. I do not wish to stop any questioning on this affair; pray believe that I am ready at any moment to enlighten you so far as I can. But you must remember that I myself am even more in the dark on some points than you, for I was not there to see what occurred."

"Don't let us talk about it any more, dear Mab," said Dick, "indeed you may turn your thoughts to happier things. Father, I will fetch you the box of letters, and you can look over them at your leisure. But I wish we could trace the owner."

"Well said, Dick! Now take your sister into the garden, and I will see the steward before Mab's fiance appears."

"Thank you for listening to us so long, father," said Mabel, with a sigh.

Reason with herself as she might, she was not yet thoroughly convinced that her father, for reasons which he deemed permissible, had not hidden something from her.

And yet Dick was convinced to the contrary! He bade her be happy and fear not. Why then should she fear?

"But it is for Neville that I am so careful!" she said in her heart, as Dick and she passed out into the garden together.

"Well, Mab," said Dick softly, when they had each breathed a sigh of relief that the interview so dreaded was over, and, on the whole, with an unhoped-for result, "there is one thing, you see, we did not think of. I could not, without pressing danger, tell my father such a dreadful thing about Caroline as that she had a secret lover, and that one of the men in the boat-house stood in such a relation to her. But do you not see that everything tends to show that the men desired to come there under a disguise? What more safe than that one of them should personate father?"

"Yes, dear Dick, I am half convinced—but still only half," replied Mab. "Oh, what shall I say to Neville when he brings me that lovely ring again to-day, as he said he would?"

"Let him put it on, and then wear it, and make all the girls in London envy you, Queen Mab! Why, you will be a sort of queen, you know—a happy one, I hope."

"Happy! Oh, Dick, I can never lose all the joy of being assured that he loves me."

"Dear Mab, I am glad you are so happy. Little did you and I think what was going to happen when I asked you to run down to the pool for me."

"No, indeed, Dick—you dear boy. Neville says he shall love you as well as I do!"

And, with a like interchange of affectionate talk, the brother and sister sat on, till sound of horse's hoofs at the front entrance caused Mab to look up and a lovely blush to suffuse her sweet face.

"There is Neville," she said softly.

"So it is! Good-bye, Mab; you won't want me now!" laughed Dick, as he walked away.

Mabel still sat where she was, her heart torn with love for Neville and troubled with lingering doubts and fears about her father's entire truth.

In her inmost soul she still said to herself, "It was his voice."

Yet certainly she did not accuse him, even in thought, of consorting with housebreakers.

In a few minutes Neville, who, she was sure, was now closeted with her father, would be once more by her side, praying, beseeching that she would allow their engagement to be formally announced, and pressing her to permit him to encircle her finger with the betrothal-ring.

What should she answer? Was she indeed to thrust such happiness from her for a thing unproved, for something which was a matter of mere conjecture? Surely it would be sheer madness to do so!

For half an hour she was engrossed with these questionings, and then a footstep, a voice, neither of which she could ever forget all her life long, sounded close to her.

"My darling!" cried Neville Wynmore, sitting down beside her, and eagerly imprisoning her hands in his. "Mab, my own love, my queen, my best beloved, you will not to-day refuse to let me place this ring on your dear hand as a sign of our happy betrothal?"

"Oh, Neville, I wish that I could see with eyes not blinded by my love for you!" she murmured, raising her beautiful eyes, full of tears, to his adoring gaze.

"My darling Mab, it is your love which does blind you on this question. I have seen your father, and to my mind he has made everything as clear as daylight."

"And to Dick's, Neville! Oh, why cannot I feel as assured as you and he on this matter?"

"Because some strange conviction has entered your mind, and you cannot at once expel it. That is the reason, darling; and your very love for me makes you morbidly sensitive as to my honor. But, if the thing is explained to my satisfaction, Mab, need you hesitate? You would not crush me by a separation from you for a mere fancy?"

"Oh, Neville, what can I say to you?" she faltered.

"That you will dismiss these fears and fancies, darling, and trust to my love entirely—I ask nothing more. Even if your father's family were proved years ago to have been connected with some by-gone hidden disgrace, will you not believe that I have love enough in my heart to come unscathed out of the trial? Oh, Mabel, can you think that my devotion would fail in the hour of need? What would it be worth if it could not stand any test? Your would for me, Mab; why should you doubt that mine would for you?" and he encircled her with his arms.

Mabel suffered him to draw her head on to his shoulder, and a delicious vista of hope opened before her.

Was it going to end like this, after all? Was she indeed to wed Neville at the end of another year, and were they two to tread life's path in company? Paradise itself could hardly seem more blest to the fair and loving girl.

She was roused by finding that Nevile was gently slipping the betrothal-ring on to her finger.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

HOW ANIMALS PRACTICE MEDICINE.—Animals get rid of their parasites by using dust, mud, clay, etc. Those suffering from fever restrict their diet, keep quiet, seek dark airy places, drink water and sometimes plunge into it. When a dog has lost its appetite it eats that species of grass known as dogs-grass, which acts as an emetic and a purgative.

Cats also eat grass. Sheep and cows, when ill, seek out certain herbs. An animal suffering from chronic rheumatism always keeps as much as possible in the sun. The warrior ants have regularly organized ambulances. Latreille cut the antennæ of the ant, and other ants came and covered the wounded part with a transparent fluid secreted from their mouths.

If a chimpanzee is wounded, it stops the bleeding by placing its hand on the wound or dressing it with leaves and grass. When an animal has a wounded leg or arm hanging on, it completes the amputation by means of its teeth. A dog on being bitten in the muzzle by a viper, was observed to plunge its head repeatedly for several days into running water. This animal eventually recovered.

A sporting dog was run over by a carriage. During three weeks in winter it remained lying in a brook, where its food was taken to it. This animal recovered. A terrier hurt its right eye. It remained under a counter, avoiding light and heat, although it habitually kept close to the fire. It adopted by way of general treatment, rest and abstinence from food. The local treatment consisted in licking the upper surface of the paw, which it applied to the wounded eye; again licking the paw when it became dry.

Animals suffering from traumatic fever treat themselves by the continued application of cold water, which M. Delaunay considers to be more certain than any of the other methods. In view of these interesting facts we are, he thinks, forced to admit that hygiene and therapeutics as practiced by animals may, in the interest of psychology, be studied with advantage.

Many physicians have been keen observers of animals, their diseases, and the methods adopted by them in their instinct to cure themselves, and have availed themselves in their practice of the knowledge so brought under their observation.

A shop lifter arrested in Toronto proved a complete treasure trove to the police. In a pocket three feet long was an assortment of spoons, thread, lace, and other valuables. Her bustle was formed of two bed sheets, a lady's beautiful hat, and a colored glass jug. Her trunks contained bed clothes, all kinds of wearing apparel, brushes, combs, over 1000 rolls of thread, a large bag of needles, pins, etc., about fifty pounds of soap, matches, fancy cards, glassware, table goods, feathers, bottles, and jars of preserves.

DO THEY KNOW?

BY E. C.

Do the birds know that they give us such pleasure
As they pour out their sweet music so free?
Do the bright flowers that we watch o'er and treasure
Know that their blossoms are lovely to see?

Do the warm rays of bright sunshine that cheer us
Know that we need them and love them so much?
Does the pale moon, as she passes so near us,
Know there are spirits on earth she can touch?

Do the trees know that we watch for their leafing,
Gauging our year by their bloom and their blight?
Do the swift torrents, to cataracts leaping,
Know that our spirits are awed by the sight?

Do the young children who laugh in their gladness
Know they are best of the gifts God has given,
Know that they brighten the hours of our sadness,
Know their soft hands draw us nearer to Heaven?

TOLD BY TWO.

BY T. W. SPEIGHT.

CHAPTER IV.—[CONTINUED.]

TWENTY minutes later we were there, greatly to my relief, for the tension of my nerves was fast becoming unendurable.

"Here you are, at Roylston, ma'am," said the guard, addressing my companion through the open window as I was preparing to alight. "You want to get out here, don't you?"

"I have changed my mind," she answered from behind her veil, and speaking with a pronounced foreign accent. "I will go on to the next station a pay the difference."

"All right, ma'am," responded the guard as he hurried off to attend to some one else.

Was the voice Mrs. Ion's voice, or was it not? I could not determine.

A minute later I was left standing on the platform, watching the train disappear in the distance.

The road to Normanfield was a lonely one and I did not care to traverse it on foot at so late an hour. I accordingly engaged a fly at the station, and was not long in reaching my destination.

As soon as I had seen her ladyship and had been commended for my skill in matching her silks, I hurried to my own room.

I had already decided on a certain plan, which I at once proceeded to put into execution. Changing my dress for a warmer one, and shrouding myself in a long, dark, hooded cloak, I stole out into the grounds by way of the conservatory, unseen by any one.

Here and there, close to the road through the park which Mrs. Ion would traverse on her way to the house, if it were she whom I had encountered in the train—certain thick clumps of evergreens were planted, and it was in the black shadow of one of these that I now took my stand.

The station at which the veiled woman had stated her intention of alighting was three miles beyond Roylston, and was two miles from Normanfield.

Presumably she would do as I had done—that is, take a fly at the station, which would deposit her at the lodge gates, whence she would have to walk up to the house.

The night was clear and starlit, and from my hiding-place, should she come my way, I could not fail to see her.

I felt very lonely and depressed as I stood there in the hushed darkness, my heart quaking at every sound, with the great silent spaces of the park unfolding themselves on every side—so lonely that it seemed as if I must be miles away from any other living being.

Only the stars seemed to look down on me with friendly eyes and to strengthen me in my newly formed resolve to break through the meshes of the dark mystery in which I felt myself entangled, if it were anyhow possible for a girl's weak hands to do so.

I had waited about a quarter of an hour, although the time seemed much longer, when I thought I distinguished the far-away sound of wheels.

I was mistaken. Nearer and nearer came the vehicle, whatever it might be, and then in a little while it stopped. Pulling the hood of my cloak over my head, I drew closer into the shelter of the evergreens, and waited.

The distance from the lodge to the house was about a quarter of a mile, and some minutes elapsed before my patience was rewarded.

At length came the sound of footsteps on the gravelled drive. As they drew nearer, I scarcely seemed to breathe.

Some one came, passed me, and went on in the direction of the house—a figure draped in black, a figure whose gait even by that dim light I did not fail to recognize; it was Mrs. Ion.

I waited so as to give her ample time to get in-doors, and then I stole back by the way I had come.

I experienced a strange sense of elation, for which I was at a loss to account, and that night my sleep was more peaceful and unbroken than it had been for weeks. Could it be because certitude had at length usurped the place of doubt in my mind, and because my duty now shone clearly before me?

The first thing I did next morning was to put one or two questions to Susan Cott, who waited on Mrs. Ion, but by no means liked her.

Yes, the girl said, Mrs. Ion had been out yesterday from ten in the morning till about nine at night, taking a holiday, she supposed. Poor Mr. Priuley had been like a fish out of water all day, and that cross, nobody could please him.

Satisfied so far, I determined to make assurance doubly sure, if it were possible to do so. A little later on, at an hour when I knew that Mrs. Ion would be busy in the library, I made my way to her bedroom, opened the door, and went in.

It was a proceeding utterly repugnant to my feelings, but in fighting fraud and cunning, one cannot always choose one's weapons.

Hanging from a peg in the wardrobe I found one of the articles I had come in search of—a long black cloak, lined with gray fur.

Near at hand was a brown silk umbrella with one bulging rib; but whereas the umbrella carried by the veiled woman had a carved ivory handle, the handle of this one was of ebony.

Some impulse, I know not what, induced me to examine the handle more closely, and it seemed scarcely a surprise to me when I found that it could be readily unscrewed from the body of the umbrella; which went to prove that any other handle of the same size might be substituted in its place. I was satisfied.

While my pupils were engaged over their one o'clock dinner, I, who had no appetite, strolled out into the grounds with a certain object in view.

I had made up my mind to tell Mr. Bruton everything. I had taken a liking to him when I saw him first on the night of the children's party; indeed, he was a man who seemed to inspire liking and confidence in every one.

Of late, he had frequently come down to spend the week end at Normanfield. More than once, when we chanced to meet in the grounds, we had had a few minutes' pleasant chat together; more than once had he requested Lady Clavison to ask me down after dinner into the drawing-room to play. To-day, I was going deliberately in search of him.

I knew that I should be nearly sure to find him in the pleached alley, smoking a cigar; and there, in fact, he was. He flung away the end of his cigar and held out his hand with a smile, as I drew near.

"You look very grave this morning, Miss Burt," he said. "I hope my nieces have not been more naughty than usual?"

"It is neither about Fanny nor Clara that I have come to see you to-day, Mr. Bruton. Can you spare me ten minutes of your time sir?"

"An hour—two hours, if requisite."

"I won't trespass on you to that extent. Certain circumstances have recently come to my knowledge which it seems to me ought to be made known to you, or to some one connected with the family, without delay. My object in intruding on you to-day is to inform you what those circumstances are."

He stared at me for a moment or two, then he said—

"Whatever you may have to say to me, Miss Burt, shall have my best attention. Pray proceed."

I began at the beginning—that is to say, I narrated to him as succinctly as possible the chief points in connection with Will's loss of the bag of money, now nearly a year and a half ago.

Then I went on to describe by what means I had first recognized Mrs. Ion, and from that to all that had happened since. He listened with the closest attention, not interrupting me by a word.

When I had done, he drew a deep breath and began in an absent-minded way to roll a cigarette.

"What dark conspiracy can be afoot?" he said at last. "What can be that woman's motive in coming to Normanfield?"

He spoke more to himself than to me. Rousing himself, he said—

"I cannot tell you how greatly obliged I am to you, Miss Burt, for making me your confidant in this matter; but at present I must confess that I am utterly at sea. I need time to think over what you have told me. At what hour can you see me again later in the day?"

"Any time after five o'clock I shall be at liberty."

"I will be in the conservatory at half-past five," he answered; and with that we parted.

Both of us were punctual to the minute. At that hour of the afternoon we were almost as secure from interruption in the dimly lighted conservatory as we should have been in the park itself.

"I have not been idle, I have excogitated an idea," he said the moment we met. "In plainer words, I have discovered a possible motive, which, if it should prove to be the real one, would at once account for Mrs. Ion's presence at Normanfield."

His words put me on the tenter-hooks of curiosity, and I told him so.

"Well, then, you must know that, among other fads, my sister always celebrates the anniversary of her wedding-day by a grand dinner-party and ball to all the big people for a dozen miles round. On these occasions she puts on the whole of her war-paint, which means that she has her diamonds home from the banker's, where they are stored for safety, and wears them in honor of that day; and it must be confessed that Laura has a very splendid stock of jewels. As a business man, it makes me wild to think of so much capital lying utterly idle and unproductive. There's the tiara my father gave her on her marriage; there's the necklace and pendant that came to her from my mother; there's the bracelet Uncle Prumley made her a present of; together with half-a-score other baubles, in fact, I doubt whether ten thousand pounds would purchase the contents of her jewel casket. Now, my dear Miss Burt, can you guess what wildgoose notion has taken hold of me since you and I talked together this morning?"

"I think I can," I answered in a low voice.

I could feel the color dying out of my face as I spoke.

"Well, then, to leave guessing. After carefully considering what you told me from every point of view I could think of, one conclusion, and one only, forces itself on my mind, that Mrs. Ion's presence under my sister's roof is connected in some occult way with a plot to rob her of her diamonds."

The same thought had flashed through my own mind the moment he made mention of Lady Clavison's jewels.

I need not detail our conversation further. Mr. Bruton impressed upon me the necessity for the strictest secrecy; not a hint, not a whisper, must be breathed to any one.

"It wants nearly a fortnight yet to Laura's wedding-day," he said. "I shall have ample time to elaborate my scheme. To-day is Thursday; on Monday I shall go up to town and make the first move in my game to checkmate Mrs. Ion."

I saw nothing more of Mr. Bruton for several days.

I think it was on the following Wednesday evening that Lady Clavison favored me with one of her formal but polite requests that I would go down and play in the drawing-room after dinner.

As I quite expected to do, I found Mr. Bruton there, and with him a stranger, a tall, dark, keen-eyed man, whom he introduced to me as his friend Mr. Felix.

Later in the evening I learned that her ladyship had invited Mr. Felix to stay over the anniversary of her wedding-day, which was now close at hand, and also that he was as much a stranger to her as to me, Mr. Bruton having brought him down from London that afternoon.

But it was enough for her ladyship to know that he was her brother's friend, and she treated him with much consideration.

Before the evening was over, I somehow came to connect the presence of this keen-eyed stranger at Normanfield with the errand which had taken Mr. Bruton to London the previous Monday morning. Ground for such an assumption I had none, yet I found it impossible to disabuse my mind of it.

As Mr. Bruton was turning over a piece of music for me at the piano, he whispered—

"All is going on well, but remember—silence and secrecy."

It was the only allusion he made to the matter between us.

CHAPTER V.

THE NARRATIVE OF EMMELINE BURT CONCLUDED.

TIME passed on, and soon the eventful day was here. Great preparations had been made in honor of the occasion; but of these I should have known little, had it not been for garrulous Mrs. Case, who, notwithstanding that she was, as she said, "nearly driven out of her mind," yet contrived to find time for her customary gossip.

It was from her I learned that Mr. Bruton and Mr. Felix had been away in London for a day, but that they had returned together on Tuesday afternoon.

Early on Wednesday morning, Mr. Bruton himself went over to Cheriton to fetch her ladyship's diamonds from the bank.

I had seen nothing of Mrs. Ion since that night when I had watched for her in the park; we had not even met casually on the stairs, as we had not unfrequently done before.

It almost seemed as if she were shunning me of set purpose.

In the afternoon, after his return from the bank, Mr. Bruton took his nieces for a canter across the downs. From my window I watched them start.

Mr. Bruton happening to look up, recognized me, and smilingly raised his hat. As I sat at my window, I saw Mr. Felix, smoking a cigar, pass and repass several times at a distance.

He seemed to be strolling aimlessly about the grounds, enjoying the fresh air and the sunshine.

What would the next few hours bring forth? If any attempt were about to be made to purloin the diamonds, it would have to be made that night or not at all, seeing that on the morrow they would be returned to the custody of the bank. All day I was restless and uneasy, and unable to settle my mind to anything.

I experienced the same quivering tension of the nerves that always affects me in thundery weather.

For me the moral atmosphere was charged with electricity. It was a relief when the short spring day drew to a close, and Mary came in with the tea-tray and a lighted lamp.

By-and-by the guests began to arrive. From where I sat, I could hear the faint roll of wheels on the gravel as carriage after carriage drove up to the front entrance.

It was the evening I always set apart for writing to Will, and I had never yet missed doing so since his departure; but to night, pen and paper lay untouched before me.

"One day can make no difference," I said to myself; "and to-morrow I may perhaps have so much more to tell him."

I sat like one who waits for the first thunder-clap.

Hour passed after hour, and no one came near me—a respite for which, under the circumstances, I was not unthankful. Now and then, when some distant door opened for a moment, a faint waft of music would reach me from the ballroom; but for that, I might have fancied myself the sole inmate of the great rambling old mansion, which to me always seemed big enough to house a regiment of soldiers.

It was long after midnight before I went to bed, and when sleep at last came to me, it brought with it dark, troubled dreams, from which I awoke at daybreak feverish and unrefreshed. Meanwhile, strange things had happened of which I knew nothing.

Hitherto, I have only written of that which came within the scope of my own experience; what follows is derived from information supplied me by others, but chiefly by Mr. Bruton.

It was four o'clock when the last of the guests drove away: day would not break till two hours later.

Lady Clavison retired at once to her dressing-room. The first thing she did was to take off her diamonds and put them away in the oaken casket, clamped with silver, which stood there on the table, and had never been out of sight of her maid the whole evening, containing as it did a quantity of rings and other jewels which she had not required.

Lady Clavison locked the casket with a key which never left her own possession, and a few minutes later dismissed her maid.

Her ladyship's dressing-room had three doors—one opening into the corridor, one into her bedroom, and a third giving access to a pretty boudoir, where she generally partook of breakfast, read her letters, and issued her mandates for the day.

The dressing-room had two windows, both of which were secured by iron bars, so that either ingress or egress by means of them was impossible.

The boudoir had one window—a French one—opening on to a balcony, which in summer was crowded with flowers, but now, in this month of March, held only two or three tubs containing evergreens. Heavy winter curtains draped all the windows.

Having dismissed Simpson, Lady Clavison proceeded to lock and bolt the door into the corridor, and then satisfied herself that the corresponding doors in the bed and rooms were also secure.

Having extinguished the lamp in the latter, she locked the door of communication between it and the dressing-room, and further drew a thick portiere across the doorway.

In the dressing-room, a dim light was left burning. These things done, Lady Clavison retired.

Sir Francis had retired long ago; he never stayed up beyond a certain hour for any one. The door opening from the dressing-room to the bedroom was shut, but not bolted.

Below stairs, Mrs. Case, cross and thoroughly tired out, had hurried every one to bed, and in a little while silence and darkness reigned throughout the mansion.

Simpson, sitting in solitary confinement as it were, and keeping watch and ward over the jewel-case, had had one visitor in the course of the evening.

Between eleven and twelve o'clock a tap had come at the dressing-room door, and when it was opened, there stood Mrs. Ion, her head shrouded in a black lace shawl.

She was suffering from neuralgia, she said, and as she knew that her ladyship sometimes suffered from the same cause, she had come to see whether Simpson could supply her with any drops or tincture that would be likely to alleviate her pain. Simpson of course asked her in, and conducted her from the dressing-room, where the jewel-casket was standing on the table, into the boudoir, where she was able, from a phial kept by her ladyship, to supply Mrs. Ion with some drops which would doubtless answer the required purpose.

Notwithstanding the pain she was in, Mrs. Ion's quick-glancing black eyes seemed to let nothing escape them.

"I have been in this room once before," she said; "it was on the occasion of my first interview here with her ladyship."

As she spoke, she drew aside the curtain that shrouded the window.

"Yes, of course, a bay window with a balcony outside. I remember it quite well;" and with a profusion of thanks, she presently went her way.

The old house was wrapped in darkness and silence, but not in sleep. All through the long hours of the March night, sharp eyes were on the watch, quick ears on the alert both indoors and out.

The stable clock had just struck five when from under a chintz-draped couch in Lady Clavison's boudoir there crept a lithe, under-sized, dark-visaged man, who must have been hidden there for some hours. Having struck a silent match, he lighted the lamp which Lady Clavison had extinguished, and then turned it down till nothing of it was visible but a tiny point of flame.

His next proceeding was to glide behind the curtain, open the fastenings of the windows, and suspend a rope with a steel hook at one end of it from the iron-work of the balcony.

In case of a surprise, he would merely have to lower himself by means of the rope and plunge into the darkness beyond. He had brought a small case of tools with him; and to a craftsman so skilled in his peculiar line as he presumably was, the door be-

tween the boudoir and the dressing-room doubtless proved but a trifling obstacle. A quarter of an hour later, he emerged on the balcony with the precious casket in his arms.

Peering cautiously down, he could just distinguish the outlines of a cloaked figure. He gave utterance to a very low "Hist!" and at once a voice gave it back like an echo.

Agile as a gymnast, a moment later he clambered over the balcony and lowered himself and the casket to the ground. Alas! it was only to feel four bony knuckles inserted between the nape of his neck and his cravat, and to see several dark-coated figures that seemed to spring from nowhere close round him the instant his feet touched terra firma.

"Allow me to carry your parcel for you," said a voice as some one took the casket out of his unresisting hands, while an instant later the light of a bull's-eye was flashed in his face.

"Ah ha, just as I suspected!" said he who had spoken before. "At your old games, Mr. Tony. We have been on the lookout for you for some time, and are glad to make your acquaintance once again."

"Anyhow, you needn't throttle a fellow," he contrived to gasp out.

They took him indoors, and there he found his wife, Mrs. Ion, as we must still call her, in charge of two constables.

It is enough to say that they were put on their trial at the next Cheriton assizes, and that both of them were sentenced to long but different terms of penal servitude. In the case of the man, two previous convictions were proved against him.

Both of them were persons of good education and tolerable ability, and had started in life with fair prospects.

How it happened that they had sunk step by step till they had come to be what they were now, was one of those sad mysteries of which unhappily we see but too many around us.

As a matter of course, the testimonials by means of which Mrs. Ion had procured the situation at Normanfield turned out to be barefaced forgeries.

It was the fame of Lady Clavison's diamonds which had first set the man's brain to work at concocting a scheme by means of which he hoped to make them his own; and it was through the agency of Mr. Felix, who was connected with a Secret Service Office in London, that the plot ended in such a signal failure.

After her conviction, Mrs. Ion, having nothing further either to gain or lose, made a full confession of her share in the bank robbery.

In that instance the scheme had also emanated from her husband's plotting brain. The young woman who was her confederate in the nefarious transaction had died about a year later.

The particulars of Mrs. Ion's confession were duly notified to Mr. Yarrell, and through him to the directors of the Bemerton Banking Company.

If the slightest shade of suspicion had ever lingered in their minds with regard to Will's honesty in the affair, it was now dispelled for ever.

Mr. Yarrell, in the name of the Board, wrote him a very handsome letter, in which he did not fail to state that he had always held him in the very highest esteem.

Will and I have been married for several years; but in our happy Australian home, as we sit in the veranda, on the still summer evenings, after the youngsters are in bed, we often call up the pictures of the past, and live over again in memory the events of which we have here endeavored to give a plain and unvarnished narrative.

[THE END.]

Paying Their Debts.

BY HENRY FRITH.

JOHN RAMSAY was working on his farm, his careless, loose dress displaying to advantage his tall, muscular figure, and a broad straw hat shaded a handsome face, with large dark eyes set beneath a forehead whose breadth and height indicated a powerful brain.

The hands that guided the plough were strong hands, but whiter and more delicate than such pursuits usually allow.

Daisy Hale sat watching him. Her dress was print, but made with flounces on the skirt, and ruffles on the waist.

Her short golden hair was curled into a fringe carefully over her forehead, and gathered in longer curls into a comb behind, above which was a very jaunty hat, covered with puffs of white muslin and bows of blue ribbon to match the spots upon her dress.

The face under Daisy's hat was gloomy, not to say cross.

A very pretty face, but not pleasant, having a petted, spoiled-child frown, and a brooding delicacy in the large blue eyes.

Presently the farmer drew near her, and taking off his hat, fanned himself with it, stopping his horses while he leaned indolently against the plough.

"You look deliciously cool under this great tree," he said. "And—hem!—very much dressed for nine o'clock in the morning!"

"In a fivepenny calico!" she said, contemptuously. "When are you coming in?"

"At noon, to dinner."

"It is too absurd," she broke out, angry tears in her eyes, "for you to be ploughing, and hoeing, and milking cows, and doing the work of a laboring man. I thought when you came home from college you would do something beside work on a farm."

"And let the farm go to ruin. That would be a poor way to pay my debts."

"Your debts," she said, looking astonished, "Do you owe debts?"

"Certainly I. You and I are both very heavily in debt, Daisy. I think when Aunt Mary took us in, poor little orphans, I—I—her nephew, you her second cousin——"

"Third cousin," she interrupted, "since you are so particular! I know what you mean, but I am very sure that Aunt Mary never intended us to drudge on the horrid old farm!"

"Do you know that all the money she saved in a life of hard work was spent upon our education? Do you know that she has nothing now but the farm, and that to take her away from it would probably shorten her life?"

"She always has taken care of it itself."

"Are you blind that you cannot see how the four years she has been alone here have aged her, how feeble she is? While we were living at ease at college and school, she has toiled for us until she is wearied out."

"But you could send her money, if you were in the City in some gentlemanly occupation."

"Perhaps so, ten or twelve years from now. To-day, I propose to work this farm, and see how many bushels of corn I can raise on it!"

He took hold of the plough handles as he spoke, started the horses, and left her, her eyes full of angry tears.

"He might as well have said what he meant," she thought, springing down and starting for the house. "He thinks I ought to cook, and wash, and make butter, and work like a servant-girl, when I have studied so hard and tried to make myself a lady, that he might not be ashamed of me."

And yet, in her heart, she knew that he was ashamed of her, and that she deserved it.

Ashamed that she could sit in her room, selfishly engrossed in making pretty articles of dress, or reading, while her cousin, or, as she, too, called her, Aunt Mary, worked in the kitchen, the dairy, the poultry yard, from day's dawn till night.

She was not all selfishness and heartlessness, though there had grown a thick crust of both over her better nature.

Her ideas of ladies and gentlemen depended largely upon clothing and pursuit, and she had not yet quite realized how much more nearly John's standard reached the desired point than her own.

As she drew near the house the sting of John's words penetrated more and more through the crust she had drawn over her heart, until a fresh stab met her at the door.

Looking in at the open door, she saw a white head bowed in weeping, a slight figure shaken by sobs.

Quickly through all the selfishness, self-reproach struck at the girl's heart, and in a moment she was on her knees beside the low chair, her arms around the weeping woman.

"Oh, Aunt Mary, what is it? Oh, please don't cry so! Oh, what—what has happened?"

"Why, Daisy, dear," through sobs that would not be checked at a moment's notice—"don't mind me. I'm only tired, dearie—only tired."

Could she have struck deeper? Tired! At seventy, housework does become a weariness!

At seventy, it may seem as if one ought to rest, while young hands and active feet take up the burdens.

She was very tired, this patient old woman, who had given her life's work for others; first, for her parents; then for an invalid brother; lastly, for the orphan children; with such innumerable acts of neighborly kindness as only the recording angel of good deeds knew.

Well might she be tired! It was new to her to be caressed, to have tender hands lead her to her room and loosen her dress, a tender voice coax her to lie down.

"Now I will darken the window," Daisy said, "and you are to rest. Sleep, if you can, until dinner-time."

"But, Daisy, you cannot make the dinner."

"I will try," was the quick reply; and Aunt Mary submitted.

Washing the potatoes, shelling peas, frying ham, making coffee, all allowed thought to be busy, and Daisy sighingly put away some of her day-dreams over her homely tasks.

"I cannot be a lady," she thought, "and John won't be a gentleman, but I will try to pay my share of the debts."

She had taken off her flounces and hat, and put on a plain dress and large check apron before she began to work; and she was rather astonished, as her kitchen duties progressed, to find herself happier than she had been since she returned home.

When John came to dinner he was astonished to find Aunt Mary "quite dressed up," as she blushingly said, in a clean print dress and white apron, her dear old face showing no sign of heat or weariness, while Daisy, with added bloom and bare white arms, was carrying in the dinner.

"The new girl, at your service," she said, saucily, as she pulled down her sleeves. "Dinner is ready, sir."

But her lips quivered as he bent over her and whispered, "God bless you, dear! Forgive me if I was too hasty this morning."

It was a merry meal. They made a play that was more than half earnest of Aunt Mary's being a great lady who has to be waited upon, and not allowed to rise from the table upon any consideration.

Dinner over, John returned to his ploughing, and Aunt Mary, firmly refusing to sit in idleness, was allowed to wash cups and saucers, while Daisy made short work of pots and pans.

John said but little as the days wore on and still found Daisy at her post.

It was not in the nature of things for Aunt Mary to sit with folded hands, but it became Daisy's task to inaugurate daily naps, to see that only the light work came to the older hands, to make daily work less of a toil and more of a pleasure.

And the young girl herself was surprised to find how much she enjoyed the life that had seemed to her a mere drudgery.

With younger hands to carry on the domestic affairs, they ceased to engross every hour of the day, and John encouraged Daisy in making use of the stiff, shut-up parlor as a daily sitting-room.

A pair of muslin curtains at each window were skilfully draped to keep out the flies, the centre table resigned its gay vase of stiff artificial flowers and stand of wax fruit, to make room for two dainty work-baskets for "afternoon work," and the periodicals John took in.

Over the shiny horse-hair sofa and chairs pretty bits of embroidery were draped, and fresh flowers were supplied each day.

Aunt Mary's caps, her collars, and aprons were adjusted to suit the new order of things, and the easiest of chairs stood ever ready for her resting-time.

And John, bringing to his task the same will and brains that had carried him through college, was inaugurating a new order of affairs on the farm, and made the work pay well.

Once more came a June day, when Daisy sat in the fields, and John stood leaning against the fence beside her.

Four years of earnest, loving work had left traces upon both young faces, ennobling them, and yet leaving to them all the glad content that rewards well-doing.

Many hours of self-denial both had met bravely; many deprivations both had borne well.

Daisy wore a black dress, and upon the hat in John's hand was a band of crape, but through a sadness in their voices there yet rang a tone of happiness.

"You love me, Daisy?" John had said to her.

"When have I not loved you?" she answered.

"And you will be my wife? Darling, I have long loved you, but after Aunt Mary was struck down with paralysis I would not ask you to take up new duties. Now she needs you no longer, and you shall leave the farm whenever you wish."

"Leave the farm! Oh, John, must we leave it? I thought it was yours now."

"So it is."

"And you have made it so beautiful, as well as profitable! Oh, John, why must we leave it?"

"Only because I thought it was your wish."

"It would break my heart to go away. I love my home."

And John, taking the little figure into a close embrace, wondered if any city could produce a sweeter, daintier little lady than the one he held in his arms.

MODERN COURTSHIP.—And you really love me dearly?" he asked, as he coiled his arm round her wasp-like waist. "And you'll always love me thus?"

"Always, Frederick; even thus."

"And you will pledge me to sew but——"

"Sir?"

"You pledge me to so beautify my life that it will always be as happy as it is now?"

"With my last breath, Frederick."

"And, darling, you will mend my soc——"

"Your what, sir?"

"You will mend my social ways, and draw me upward and onward to a better existence?"

"It will be the pride of my love so to do, Frederick. I will sacrifice all for your complete happiness."

"I know that, my sweet. But suppose some accident should happen to—to—to, say, the trou——"

"To the what?"

"To the trousseau; would it defer the hour which makes you mine?"

"Never, Frederick. I an yours, mind and heart, and naught can separate us."

"But what I want to say is that should my pant——"

"Begone, sir? What do you mean?"

"Hear me, my life! I say, if my panting bosom should grow cold in death, would your love still warm it?"

"As the sun melts the iceberg, Frederick, so would the rays of my affection thrill your heart again."

"And you will care for me ever, my soul, and I for you, for though I may never have a shir——"

"Enough! Leave me forever!"

"But listen. Though I may not have a shirking disposition, I shall sometimes, perhaps, in the struggle of life, forget the plain duty——"

"And I'll remind you of it, Frederick, in tender actions, and make the duties of existence so pleasant of performance that to avoid them will be pain."

And so on. That's modern courtship.

Lots of abstract nonsense, but a manifest disinclination to contemplate such possibilities as buttons, trousers, and shirts.

Scientific and Useful.

SCARS.—In the healing of burns and scalds, where there is danger of contracting scars, rub the new skin several times a day with good sweet oil. Persist in this rubbing until the skin is soft and flexible.

POISON.—A method of attaching an alarm-bell to bottles or packages containing poison has been discovered. When the receptacle is taken in hand the bell rings, giving notice of the dangerous nature of the contents.

CONSUMPTION.—French physicians claim to have found out by experiments upon rabbits that consumption may be cured by the administration of tannin. Over fifty cases of phthisis have been treated by giving tannin in doses of from two to four grams daily, and improvement was perceptible in two weeks, the patients increasing in weight.

PLATE GLASS.—To polish plate glass and remove slight scratches, rub the surface gently, first with a clean pad of white cotton wool, and afterward with a pad covered over with cotton velvet which has been charged with fine rouge. The surface will, under this treatment, acquire a polish of great brilliancy, quite free from any scratches.

HOT PLATES.—In a common dinner-service it is a great mistake to make the plates too hot, as it invariably cracks the glaze on the surface, if not the plate itself. In this condition they will also absorb grease, and, when exposed to further heat, the heat makes the dishes brown and discolored. If an old ill-used dish be made very hot indeed, fat will be seen to exude from the minute fissures upon its surface. The latter remarks apply more particularly to common wares.

MARKING TOOLS.—It is convenient sometimes to mark our tools. This can easily be done as follows: First, clean the place you wish to mark and then cover it with a thin layer of beeswax, raising the edges so as to form a basin. Now write your name in the wax with a sharp instrument, cutting it through to the steel. When this is done, fill the basin with undiluted nitric acid or aqua-fortis, and let it stand awhile. The longer it stands the deeper it will cut. Then wash with water. The same process can be applied to hard wood, but great care is required.

Farm and Garden.

VERMIN.—The hardest work for the poultryman is keeping vermin out of the coops. New coops are not exempt. By using kerosene on the roosts, removing the droppings frequently and whitewashing the walls once every month the vermin may be prevented.

THE ROADS.—It is now generally admitted that no road can be perfect that is not well underdrained. Throwing the dirt to the centre turns off the surplus surface water, but that which goes down should be carried off underground instead of partially evaporating from the surface.

SURPLUS STOCK.—It is much better to sell off all the surplus stock than to attempt to feed too many on a short supply of food. The extra animals require food for the support of their bodies, without gaining, which supply of food should go to the purpose of increasing the weight of a fewer number.

SLOW AND FAST.—Although the trotting horse is valuable as a roadster, yet the fast walking horse on the farm deserves a high place in favor, as nearly all the work on the farm done by horses is at the walking gait. There are times, however, when a slow walking horse is efficient, such as when cultivating between the rows.

THE SHEEP.—In summer sheep prefer short blue grass or clover pasture, but for a change of diet will often eat many kinds of weeds and briars. We must only feed sound, wholesome food, but it must be of the right kind, if we expect to clip a heavy fleece. A sheep can be fatted on food abounding in starch and sugar, but wool cannot be made of these alone. Its fibre is made largely of flesh-forming elements. The blue grass or clover of the summer pasture yields this sufficiently, but in the winter oats, wheat middlings and bran should be fed with corn, if that grain is preferred.

NATIONAL SEED.—The Agricultural Department does not make a practice of supplying ordinary farm seeds to all applicants, but aims to send out only the newer things or imported specialties that require practical test to demonstrate their adaptability to any section of the country. Each member of Congress is allowed several thousand packets of these seeds, which are sent to such addresses as he may order. The Department reserves a quantity, and sends them to parties whom it thinks will make good use of them. Name what seeds you prefer, adding that if they are not to be had, you would like to try any others that the Department of Agriculture is sending out. Make your request to the Representative in Congress from your district, and you will either get some seeds or some words from him. Applications for seed made direct to the Department are frequently complied with if the applicant can give any special reason for wanting them.

PARIS recently reached a record of 300 divorces in one day.

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Of the Imagination.

The imagination often magnifies small objects, so as to fill the mind with a fantastic estimate; and with haughty insolence contracts the great to its own dwarfish measure—as, for instance, in speaking of God.

The world of reality has its limits, but the world of imagination is boundless. Not being able to enlarge the one, we contract the other; for it is from their difference alone that all the evils arise which render us really unhappy.

It is its divine attribute that is irrepressible, unconfinable; that when the real world is shut out, it can create a world for itself, and with a necromantic power can conjure up glorious shapes and forms, and brilliant visions to make solitude populous and irradiate the gloom of a dungeon.

Imagination likewise is that faculty which arouses the passions by the impression of exterior objects; it is influenced by these objects, and consequently it is in affinity with them; it is contagious; its fear or courage flies from imagination to imagination; the same in love, hate, joy, or grief.

This faculty is one of the great springs of human activity, and one of the principal sources of human improvement. As it delights in presenting to the mind scenes and characters more perfect than those which we are acquainted with, it prevents us from ever being completely satisfied with our present condition, or with our past attainments, and engages us continually in the pursuit of some untried enjoyment, or of some ideal excellence. Hence the ardor of the selfish to better their fortunes, and to add to their personal accomplishments; and hence the zeal of the patriot and the philosopher to advance the virtue and happiness of the human race. Destroy this faculty, and the condition of man will tend to become as stationary as that of the brutes.

Give it the least license, and it dives deeper and soars higher than nature goes. It is the ruler of our dreams—a circumstance that may account for the peculiar vividness of the impressions they produce. And such is its power that even a chimerical pleasure in expectation affects us more than a solid pleasure in possession.

But, looked at at its root, what is the imagination? Only an arm or weapon of the interior energy; only the precursor of the reason. It disposes of everything; it creates beauty, justice and happiness, which is everything in this world.

It is the organ through which the soul within us recognizes a soul without us; the spiritual eye by which the mind perceives and converses with the spiritualities of nature under her material forms; which tends to exalt even the senses into soul by discerning a soul in the objects of sense.

If we except the blessings of strength, health and the testimony of a good conscience, all the other conveniences and pleasures of life depend on opinion. Except pain of body and remorse of conscience, all our evils are imaginary.

The imagination often magnifies the veriest trifle, by a false and romantic preference, till it fills the whole soul; or, in its heedless presumption, brings down the most elevated subjects to our own low standard.

It frequently acquires by custom a certain involuntary, unconscious power of observation and comparison, correcting its own mistakes, and arriving at precision of judgment, just as the outward eye is disciplined to compare, adjust, estimate, measure the objects reflected on the back of its retina. The imagination is but the faculty of glassing images; and it is with exceeding difficulty, and by the imperative will of the reasoning faculty resolved to mislead it, that it glasses images which have no prototype in truth and nature.

Many of our griefs, as well as our joys, owe their strongest colors to our imagination. There is nothing so grievous to be borne that pondering upon will not make heavier; and there is no pleasure so vivid that the animation of fancy cannot enliven. And altogether the soul without imagination is what an observatory would be without a telescope, confining our inward vision to a small and narrow bound.

The culture of imagination is worthy of a more prominent place in the training of youth than it has ever yet received. We must regard it, not merely or chiefly in its intellectual capacity, or as a promoter of good taste and refinement, but as a moral and ethical educator. We should take care that the ideals they form are noble, the desires they cherish are pure, the examples they look up to are sound and true, the heroes and heroines they admire are worthy of respect. This can be done only through a loving sympathy and a tender care that provides for, not crushes, their eager and ardent enthusiasms.

The examples we set them, the companions we find them, the books we furnish them, the moral atmosphere in which we place them, should all combine to purify and ennoble their imaginings, and, through them, to enrich and exalt their lives. If we neglect these things, or leave them to chance influences, no amount of effort to control their actions, to regulate their words, even to form their habits, can compensate. It is what each one aspires to become that will form the great motive power to decide what he may become.

It is the sublime immensity of the sea that gives to the waves their grace and brilliance, the strength and stability of the mountains that give charm to their variety of height and shape as we view them from a distance, the long stretch of level ground that causes our pleasure in the hill or lake that breaks upon our sight. Art, in like manner, to be pleasing, must give us somewhat of monotone before its novelty can charm. In architecture there must be massive walls and pillars, and the decoration must be subordinate. In painting, the background must be strong and clear to give effect to the picture. In music, the monotonous passage must be prolonged to a certain extent to give zest to the changes that delight the ear. So in life there must be sameness if any benefit is to be derived from change. There must be rest before motion, home before travel, work before play, duty before pleasure.

All labor well and worthily performed is in itself a direct means of elevating and improving the laborer. In the first place it calls forth energy and force, and they grow by exercise. No system of self-culture, however elaborate, can ever give that vigor and tone to the system, or that sense of power to the mind, which comes from regular, well performed labor. To work with a purpose, whether it be at the forge or the shop, in the factory or the office, in the field or the studio, in the kitchen or the school room, gives a conscious ability that nothing else can produce, and that goes far to make the manly and the womanly character.

Every breach of faith, every broken promise, every mean advantage taken, however small and trifling each may appear, helps to build up the dishonesty which at some time, and by some one, wrecks the happiness of multitudes and drags down the sinning one to degredation and ruin. The honor of the country and the integrity of the nation are in the hands of every citizen; each is responsible for his share in making or in marring them.

Make up your mind to work early and late, if necessary, that you may thoroughly master the details of the business upon which you propose to enter. The habit of persistent rapid work once formed, you have gained a momentum that will carry you satisfactorily through many a pinch in business where a less persistent worker would find it easier to lie down and fail.

Care is something that falls to the lot of all. As the life advances, it comes with every new responsibility, and every honest man and woman accepts it as his or her share in the world's burdens. No one but the selfish idler would wish to be entirely free from care, but we justly hold him in honor who faithfully takes up that which falls to his lot, and fulfils the duties it involves.

All history teaches that good of every kind has first existed in the conceptions of the best and wisest men, then been gradually diffused through the minds of the many, and at length transmuted into the most practical and vital realities of life and conduct. The philosopher's dream, if he be a true philosopher, becomes in time the cherished standard of common daily life.

We ought to be very tender with naturally shy children. The agonies these little people have to go through they alone can understand. But those of us who have passed through the same ordeal can remember what we suffered in our day of small beginnings and unused experience, and by ourselves we can judge them.

The good man who is reflective will find that, as his views on various points change with increasing knowledge, his standard of action changes also. Some things which he once regarded with the utmost leniency he now looks upon as grave wrongs, and as fast as he discovers the best path in any direction it becomes for him the path of duty.

Hope is based upon faith; desire upon caprice. The former is almost always calm and steady, moderate and reasonable; the latter is often impulsive and unsettled, extravagant and unreasonable, for desire (with its present longings) anticipates only a momentary gratification, while hope, with its moral bearings, looks forward to some permanent good.

You have seen a ship out on the bay, swinging with the tide, and seeming as if it would follow it; and yet it cannot, for down beneath the water it is anchored. So many a soul sways toward heaven, but cannot ascend thither because it is anchored to some secret sin.

When you make a mistake don't look back at it long. Take the reason of the thing into your own mind, and then look forward. Mistakes are lessons of wisdom. The past cannot be changed. The future is yet in your power.

Every action, every thought, every feeling contributes to the education of the temper, the habits and understanding, and exercises an inevitable influence upon all the acts of our future life.

Could we read aright, we should find that every human being carries the lineaments of his life in the face. Good looks or ill looks accord respectively with the complexion of the life.

A man ought to carry himself in the world as an orange tree would if it could walk up and down in the garden—swinging perfume from every little censer it holds up to the air.

It is not sufficient not to intend to do wrong; we must intend to do right, and carry out our intentions also. Not to think is in such case a crime.

Some men are like pyramids, which are very broad where they touch the ground, but grow narrower as they reach the sky.

The World's Happenings.

A full cosmetic set, that comes in the shape of a watch, is out.

A death from cigarette smoking is recorded at Keyport, N. J.

Thirty Chinamen gave a concert in a Jersey City church recently.

Last year 1,802 locomotives were constructed in the United States.

In India there are four female missionaries to every million of women.

One-fourth the milk dealers in Boston, the local inspector of milk asserts, are dishonest.

A strange thing about Dale county, Fla., is the fact that there is not a public road in the county.

A balloon that will carry up 100 persons, as it is stated, is to be a feature of the Paris Exposition of 1889.

Queen Victoria acknowledges through her secretary every poem sent to her. She never reads them.

A young woman of Detroit, who recently inherited $250,000, has refused thirty offers of marriage in the last three months.

A youth of 16, whom a Kentucky paper has been looking up at, is described as being 6 feet 4 inches tall and weighs 165 lbs.

Last year the people of this country smoked 3,510,898,588 cigars—an average of over fifty for every man woman and child in the land.

At an inquest held not long ago at Bath, England, respecting the death of an old lady, it was found that she had died from the results of a wasp sting.

The Rev. John White, a colored preacher of Arkansas, who will be 102 years old in July, has been married to Miss Edie Smith, a maiden of 65 summers.

The postoffice in India is regarded as so miraculous an agency by the more ignorant natives that in some rural places the very letter boxes are worshipped.

A justice of the peace in Chester, Mass., who is 86 years old, has just been recommended for a term that will make him 93 years of age when it expires, if he lives.

The Salvation Army in Nevada City, Nev., has been required to pay a license, the authorities holding that their praise meetings come under the head of "shows."

Wild geese and ducks have become so destructive a pest to the grain fields of Alameda, Cal., that the farmers are driven to the use of luminous scarecrows to drive them away.

If no more birds are killed it will take a period of three generations of men's lives before the woods and pastures can be repeopled, while some of the most beautiful and useful birds are lost to us forever.

Raymond Ferguson, of Utica, Ind., is the father of a baby that weighs just one pound. Its arms are 3 inches long; its legs 4 inches. It is well formed and apparently healthy, and bids fair to live and grow.

A great dictionary—which promises to be the most perfect yet collated—is now being gotten up in New York, to be called the Century Dictionary. It will require the work of 100 editors for 10 years to put it in shape.

The oldest horse in the world is claimed by a farmer of Chili, Ill., whose father purchased it 40 years ago from the Indians when it was supposed to be 2 years old. It served all through the war, but escaped injury.

A law intended to restrict the number of lawyers is on its way in the New York Assembly. It provides that new lawyers must take out license at $500 for attorneys in New York, and $100 in other cities of the State.

In an auction room at Bridgewater, Mass., some days ago, about the time the auctioneer had gone from "going" to "gone," the floor went, carrying into the cellar 200 people, none of whom, fortunately, were seriously hurt.

Postmaster L. Davis, of the town of Solar, Jackson county, Ill., receives the moderate salary of ten cents a year. The postmaster at Peck, Ill., got thirty cents last year, while the postmaster of Lear, Ark., got thirty-one cents.

A doctor in Pittsfield, N. Y., a local authority says, informs those who may be taken with a bad spell, by a sign on the door of his office in one of the principal streets, that he can be found "hear on fridays and Saterdays only."

Peter Shellenbarger, of Hartville, Ohio, killed a fat cow and found in her stomach a butcher knife seven inches long, with a keen edge and a sharp point. It had lacerated the coating of the stomach a little, but the cow had seemed none the worse for it.

A burglar, with whom a man in Laurens county, Ga., grappled upon being awakened some nights ago, directed an accomplice to shoot. This the accomplice did, but the ball killed the struggling intruder, who was then found to be a constable. The other burglar escaped.

Snow isn't altogether indispensable to the toboggan slide. Five Staten Island lads gained access to one on a recent Sunday and managed to have a couple of hours' good fun, by the aid of a box of candles, with which they greased the slides and tobogganed, before a police officer slid them off to a station house.

A mechanical expert given to curious investigations estimates that the tooting of a locomotive on the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad, in an ordinary day's run, involves a waste of steam requiring the consumption of 280 pounds of coal to renew. He estimates the whistling expenses of that particular railway at $15,000 per year.

One of the Auditors in the Treasury Department at Washington who had rented a house in a fashionable quarter of the city, was surprised to discover that his landlord was a messenger in his (the Auditor's) bureau. Investigation showed that the man was making $5,000 a year by loaning money at 10 per cent. interest a month to clerks in the department.

WHY?

BY RITA.

Why is it that we're always grieving,
Grieving o'er some fancied wrong?
It doesn't hurt the wrong, or right it,
We'd better far be brave and fight it,
Or utterly ignore or slight it;
Wipe it out with work and song.

Why is it that we mourn for loved ones,
When death brings them sweet relief?
Links in heaven cannot sever,
The future joins us there forever,
Pain and suffering touch us never,
Surely there's no cause for grief.

Life is what we choose to make it,
Sunshine, shadow, joy or woe.
Sunshine o'er the earth is beaming,
Shadows o'er our paths are streaming,
With joy and woe the world is teeming,
We can choose them as we go.

A Girl's Hero.

BY M. E. W.

FIFTEEN miles to Dartmoor.' Yes, it must be 'Dartmoor,' though the word is rather like one of my own novels—the end of it is left to the imagination."

The man who had climbed up the bank to study the dilapidated sign-post laughed a little as the simile struck him, as if the though of his work were a pleasant one, and then he dropped lightly on to the path beneath, and trudged cheerily on his way.

He was a good-looking man of about forty, with the indefinable well-satisfied air that stamps the successful worker, and he stepped out in a blithe jaunty fashion that proved him equally content with himself and with the world at large.

He was carrying a tiny bunch of bluebells, and as he walked he plaited and replaited their slender stems, and framed some very pretty verses in which the fairy bells were chiming him their secrets; but all the time it was with an unconscious self-pity that such pretty lines should be without a listener—for, though George Medwyn was a poet, he was also a vain man.

Not that this foible of his diminished his general attractiveness. On the contrary, every one used to declare—with the exception of his wife, and she, poor woman, was naturally prejudiced—that it only rendered him the more charming, for he was a general favorite, and worked very hard and honestly for his popularity. His position as musical critic on a leading weekly newspaper was a great assistance to him in this way, for people were always asking favors that George Medwyn made a point of never refusing; and, if these same promises of his were not invariably fulfilled, it was felt that it was owing to circumstances over which he had no control.

George Medwyn, critic, novelist, and poet, was a tall, fair, broad-shouldered man with large blue eyes to which short sightedness gave the appearance of dreaminess; and he was looking his best on that May morning as he marched along the winding Devonshire lanes and toyed with his blue bells and smiled at his rhymes.

After consulting the sign-post, he walked on steadily for two or three miles, when his steps were suddenly arrested by the sight of one of those beautiful views of which Devon is most prodigal. The trees which fringed the lanes broke as if to frame the picture; and Medwyn, keenly alive to the beautiful, stood still and gazed.

The wilder scenery of the last few miles was here exchanged for the smiling serenity of pasture-land, in the midst of which mild-eyed Alderney cows were browsing contentedly.

Far away to the left the ground was again broken into rugged wildness, but to the right the horizon was bounded by a belt of trees, at the foot of which—for here the undulating ground sloped upwards—nestled a cottage.

Such a pretty cottage! Low and straggling, its white walls were well-nigh covered by ivy, the spring growth of the pale green tendrils of which was flung into bold relief against the prevailing darkness of the older leaves; the porch stood in the centre, and the lattice windows were ranged on either side; while a border of gaily-colored flowers that ran in ribbon fashion round the house gave the final touch to a very pretty picture.

Medwyn first glanced up and then down the lane. It looked monotonous and dusty and the mid-day sun was rather too warm to be pleasant. Why not walk up to the house, beg a rest, and perhaps a meal?

He left the lane, struck across the fields, and turned into the little wood, intending to have a cigar before proceeding to the house. Having lighted up, he stretched himself upon the grass and fell into one of his long rambling day-dreams.

The day was warm, the whole atmosphere of the spot was highly conducive to slumber, and things in general were just beginning to grow indistinct, when he was startled into wakefulness in so strange a fashion that for long years afterwards the impression still remained.

"George Medwyn," said a girl's voice, dwelling on his name with a tender loving intonation that of itself was the most delicate flattery—"George Medwyn—I love that man!"

The listener raised himself on one elbow and glanced around him with amused eyes. No one was within sight, and, before he could move, the soft voice began again—

"Shakspeare, Spencer, and Poems by George Medwyn—I am afraid I like those best!"

The last words were uttered half regretfully, as though the speaker fully realized the enormity of the confession; and then, as Medwyn rolled over on to his side, the mystery was solved.

A tolerably wide ditch and a high thick-grown hedge divided the little wood from the garden that lay at the back of the cottage; and in this garden his unknown admirer must be sitting.

"Who is it?" he mused. "A mere girl, of course, to class me with such writers, and an ignorant one to own to such a preference."

Medwyn lay still on the grass and tried to imagine her.

The dancing sunbeams penetrated his leafy screen and flashed into his eyes, and he was glad afterward to remember that his first thought of the girl was gilded by the sunlight.

The soft wind sighing through the wavy grass, the sunbeams that, falling through the interlacing leaves, were touching tue earth with a golden radiance, and the tender freshness of the sweet young voice, all entered into his heart with a sudden rush of happiness and delight. And while he was musing the girl spoke again.

"'To My Lady of the Star-like Eyes,'" she announced in a slow deliberate fashion speaking her thought aloud; and Medwyn fairly glowed with delight, for it was the title of his favorite poem, and this girl was going to read it. He smiled again, and prepared himself for a treat.

He was not disappointed, for the reader was evidently very much enamored of her subject, and uttered the tender-love words as though her whole sympathy was with them. Barely however had the last words died away when her voice took a higher tone, as if in answer to some signal from the house.

"Yes, grandpapa!" she called.

There was a hasty scamper as if to collect her books, the flutter of a gown as she ran along under the hedge, and then Medwyn disburdened himself of a prodigious sigh, for the most charming episode of his walking tour was already a thing of the past.

Not for one moment did he think of following her. He was too much of an epicure to run the risk of lessening any of his pleasures; and this outspoken admiration was too dainty a morsel with which to feed his vanity for him to risk spoiling it.

"If I go to the house and hunt her up," he argued, "I am sure to be confronted with some ordinary specimen of country girlhood. My divinity has most likely a round-hard face of the color of the kitchen warming-pan, and her hands will be big and red. Ugh!"—and he shuddered at the mere idea. "No—far better leave her alone, for the thought of her is charming at present."

So, with many self-congratulations that his strength of mind enabled him to retain undisturbed so pleasant a recollection, George Medwyn rose and went on his way whistling.

One question only he permitted himself, and that was at Dartmoor, where he inquired the name of the owner of the house that had so taken his fancy.

"Heath," was the answer—"Mr. Christopher Heath;" and that was the name that George Medwyn carried back with him to his city chambers.

* * * * * * *

It was a fine morning toward the end of the season, and George Medwyn was sitting in his room in the Temple in anything but a sweet frame of mind.

His troubles with his wife had caused an open rupture, and, although there had been no formal separation, they went their own ways by mutual consent, and Mrs. Medwyn and the children were left in undisputed possession of the house.

The "Society" papers were, as usual, exceedingly generous in their explanations of these domestic differences; but, as the reasons assigned were generally false ones, the only end attained was to annoy the Medwyns themselves and afford more or less amusement to their friends.

Perhaps the journal that hinted at "lack of artistic sympathy on the lady's part" was the one that came nearest the truth, for Medwyn was suffering from the saddest of mental ailments—he considered himself misunderstood.

It was not only a necessity with George Medwyn that his writings should be read, but also that they should be admired—at all events, by his own wife; and it was because of her want of appreciation of his work that differences had arisen between them.

Beef or mutton for the day's dinner, Hattie's cough and Johnnie's lessons, were of far more importance to Mrs. Medwyn than the rejection of some fictitious man by some fictitious girl; and Medwyn, whose nature craved a good deal of outspoken sympathy, not unnaturally felt aggrieved. He thought her hard—she thought him visionary; and, when, like a quarrelsome couple, they told each other facts, it required but little more to cut him adrift from his home-life and leave her alone with the children.

It was of all this that he was thinking as he sat in his bachelor's quarters and thrummed on the table with nervous impatient fingers.

"Why on earth didn't Jule care for me after the fashion of that girl in Devonshire?" he asked himself angrily—for he had thought a good deal lately of his unknown admirer. He had never forgotten her soft voice or her pretty enthusiasm for his book, and he often wished that he had gone in search of her. She was young of course, and pretty too, he thought—for, so far from retaining his idea of rustic girlhood, he had grown to endow to her with all the charms of a Venus.

"If she were only in town," he thought, "I would go to her to-night and read her that beautiful descriptive chapter that Julia found so wearisome. I am sure she would appreciate it."

With an impatient "Pshaw!" at his own folly, he drew his unopened letters towards him and began turning them over. One was from his publisher; several more were on various business-matters; one was an abusive note from a brother-critic, another an affectionate "gush" from a lady friend; and then, at the very bottom of the pile, he came upon an unfamiliar handwriting, stiff and peculiar, and above it the post-mark of "Dartmoor."

Medwyn slit the envelope and turned to the signature at the end of the letter. "Laura Heath." Heath? Why that was the owner of the old Devonshire cottage, and this girl——

With a smothered exclamation of delight George Medwyn pushed away the other papers and began reading the letter.

"I pray you to forgive my writing to you," it began abruptly, without either preface or address; "but I owe you so much that I want to tell you a little of my gratitude."

This beginning was hardly promising, for Medwyn was continually receiving compliments couched in much the same form; but as he read rapidly on he grew more and more interested, for Laura Heath's letter was different from any he had ever received.

She had neither chosen her words nor studied her phrases, but had written straight on in a happy child-like fashion, in all the glow of her innocent hero worship. She lived alone with her grandfather, she told him, and had absolutely no companions but her books. Her grandfather did not like company, so they saw no one but the Vicar, who was very clever and had educated her entirely.

"So you must forgive me," wrote Laura, "if I do wrong in sending you this letter, for the Vicar says no girl was ever so strangely taught as I; but grandfather would teach me Latin instead of French, and he so hates modern writers that in all our large library the youngest book is Miss Burney's *Evelina*."

Medwyn stopped in his reading, and, shutting his eyes, again tried to conjure up the writer.

He tried too to imagine what the effect would be upon a girl who, utterly ignorant of modern thought and expression, but steeped in old-world fancies and quaint bygone diction, was suddenly confronted with his own latter-day poems, in which his age was mirrored with the tolerable fidelity, and which glowed with all the passionate love-fervor of a true disciple of Swinburne.

Laura told him how his book had fallen in her way. A passing tourist had taken shelter at the cottage, and had left the volume behind by mistake; and this child of sixteen had seized it with delight.

"Once more I ask your forgiveness," were her last words, "for it is a sorry fashion of repaying you to send this wearisome letter; but your book has brightened all my summer, and I am very grateful."

That was all, but, coming at that moment when Medwyn was feeling sorely unappreciated and miserable, a celestial messenger could hardly have been more welcome; and, with the influence of the letter fresh upon him, he sat down and wrote Laura Heath his answer.

With some of her own frankness he told her how charmed and delighted he had been with the kindly appreciation that he so little deserved—for, like most vain men, Medwyn was always anxious to impress his humility on the world at large.

He had been despondent and unhappy when her note had arrived, but she had encouraged him to fresh attempts, and, if there was any question of gratitude between them, it was from him that it was due.

Then he asked her to read the novel he was forwarding her, and tell him what she thought of it, and tell him too, when next she wrote, a little more of her quiet peaceful life; and, lastly, he begged her to remember that it was a writer's highest privilege to win and maintain through the medium of letters the friendship of those whom circumstances had placed out of his reach, and that he hoped he might number her amongst those who were willing to be called his friends.

It was a charming letter—one well calculated to make the soft-voiced child down in Devon glow with delight at the honor he had done her, and press the paper with her pure young lips.

Of course she wrote back; and this was the commencement of a long correspondence between the two.

All through the winter Medwyn sent her books, reviews, and poems, scraps of his city life and bits of literary gossip—anything and everything, in fact, that he thought would interest or please her, and so procure him a continuance of those unconventional letters and frank girlish confidences that he found so charming.

Harassed and troubled as he often was, annoyed about business-matters, and weary of the humdrum round of pleasure that would have satisfied a less fastidious man, George Medwyn found a strange sense of rest and delight in the friendship of this girl whom he had never seen, but of whom he thought so often.

Her letters came as a breath of pure country air into the heated atmosphere of his own busy life, and, though her innocence and ignorance at times amused him, they only rendered her the more captivating in the eyes of a man who was daily growing more jaded and disillusionne.

Long before the spring-time he knew all about Laura Heath—knew the books she read and the flowers she tended, knew her thoughts and fancies, and had even sent her one of his photographs so that she might not picture him other than he was. For he knew that he should see her, and very shortly.

Old Mr. Heath had long been dying, and at his death—for so he told his grandchild, and so she told Medwyn—Laura was to live with a cousin of her dead father's who was a lady-doctor in Kensington.

So their meeting had long been a favorite thought with Medwyn; but, when it came at last, it was unexpected.

One May morning, when he was hard at work, a tap came at his door, and the handle was gently turned. He looked up from his writing somewhat dazzled, for the sun at that moment streamed full into the room and then he called out—

"Come in!"

"I can't open the door—it has caught against the mat," answered a soft voice, the tone of which suddenly recalled a memory of a year before; and the man's face flushed hotly as he sprang to his feet.

"Half a moment—I will help you. Now then"—as he pulled the door open—"please come in. I am sure who you must be."

He led his visitor into the room, and she turned swiftly holding out both her hands.

"Then say you are glad to see me," pleaded the girl prettily—"for, oh, I am so glad to see you at last!"

The sunlight was falling upon her, lighting up the wavy tawny hair and sparkling in the glorious dancing eyes; and George Medwyn's answer was as eager as her own.

"Glad? I am enchanted to see you!" he said warmly. "For of course you are Laura!"

And the girl echoed his words.

"Yes," she said, "I am Laura."

"So you have really found your way here at last! And, do you know, you are exactly as I had imagined you."

The first few minutes were over, and Laura was ensconced in the depths of a great velvet-covered chair, with George Medwyn standing before her, smiling down into her bright upturned face.

"Yes—exactly as I had imagined you," he repeated; "but, oh, what a child you are."

"Oh, no! Really I am pretty old," protested Laura. "I shall be seventeen very soon."

"Seventeen!" echoed Medwyn. "And I am forty. Does that seem very old to you?"

The girl laughed, and shook her head.

"Now tell me honestly," he went on. "We have been such good friends all these months, haven't we? And, though you are too childlike and too innocent to guess how dark a man's life may be, you can understand a little how your friendship has brightened mine, can't you?"

Laura looked up wistfully, with a half-awed expression in her beautiful eyes.

"Is your life dark?" she asked softly. "I am so sorry! But to fancy it—you——"

"Yes I," interrupted Medwyn. Why not?"

Her naivete charmed him, and her next words completed her unconscious conquest.

"You are so good and so clever," said Laura Heath; "and you help other people to be good, and make them very happy. It seems so strange that you should be miserable."

"Make other people happy—do I, little one?" Medwyn's voice trembled. "Have I made you happy?"

"I told you in my letters," replied the girl shyly; and Medwyn continued—

"Do you know that your encouragement and your counsel have been so precious to me that now I see you I am half jealous of my own books?"

"Jealous?" she echoed.

Her solitary life had rendered her chary of her words, but somehow, slight and childish as she was, Medwyn found this desultory talking was more than pleasant occupation.

"Yes," he answered; "for now I am anxious as to whether you will like me as much as you like them."

"Of course I shall," said Laura promptly. "The only thing to be afraid of is——Oh, Mr. Medwyn"—with a sudden break in her voice—"do not talk about our being friends, you and I, for it isn't equal! You are a—poet" she drew a long breath before speaking the word, as if the world could hold no higher title—"a poet, and I am only a stupid girl. I know no one but this new cousin I live with, and I have not read the same books or done anything that you have."

She stopped suddenly in her piteous little appeal, and George Medwyn took both her hands in his own strong clasp.

"Don't be alarmed at your own innocence," he said gently; "it only makes you the more beautiful in my eyes. See now, my child—I want you to promise me that I may help you, and teach you just a little perhaps, and be to you what your own father would have been had he lived. You are not alarmed now?"

"Oh, how good you are!" cried the girl gratefully. "No, I will not be alarmed any more. And you will come and see my new home, won't you, Mr. Medwyn? My cousin, Doctor Mary Grain, knows you a little, I think, and she said I was to ask you."

"Doctor Mary Grain? Ah, yes!" said Medwyn. "I have had the pleasure of meeting her two or three times. I shall be only too glad to come."

And so it was arranged; and, when at last he saw her into a cab, it was on the

understanding that he was to call on her on the morrow.

Laura Heath's thoughts as she was driven homeward were strangely happy ones. To be received in such a manner by the man whom she had learnt to love and revere above all other men—why, the mere thought of it was bewildering!

Laurie recalled the kind pressure of the firm white hand, the tender cadence of his voice as he asked her to look on him as something more than an ordinary friend, the very look in his dreamy blue eyes as he said it; and then, thinking of it all, she told herself once again that Medwyn was one of the grandest of men and she herself the most fortunate of girls.

Very glad was she to see him when he called the next day, and very quickly flew the time while they talked of books and people, of flowers and fancies.

The more Medwyn saw of her the more he was delighted; and that evening was the forerunner of many another spent in the pretty house in Kensington, until hardly a day passed without bringing Laurie some token of his presence.

If he was too busy to come to her, or to join her at the various reunions, theatres, etc., to which she went under her cousin's wing, he still found time to forward her books, reviews, new music, and so on.

Fortunately for him, Doctor Mary Grains was the laxest of chaperons, for this worthy lady, having spent much of her life in New York, had imbibed many of the American free-and-easy notions, and saw no reason why Laurie should not have as much liberty as herself.

She was an intensely busy woman, and, being often prevented from fulfilling her promise of taking her young cousin to some theatre or concert, would entreat George Medwyn to go in her stead rather than disappoint the child.

Medwyn was all acquiescence, and many an hour he and Laura were alone—hours that the man grew to look upon as the resting time of his busy harassed life, and the girl as the one thing for which he lived. Ay, that was the difference!

That it was which proved Laurie's words so cruelly prophetic when she told him that a friendship between them would be unequal. Until he had been thrown in her way she had received no caress, heard no loving word.

And Medwyn? So fresh and sweet was Laurie that he wilfully mistook the light that sparkled in her eyes, and told himself that she was only a child as yet, and that no harm could come of thus feeding his vanity. For, oh, it was dainty food on which to regale it!

To take his poems and his troubles, his work and his discontent—one and all—to this sweetest of girl-sympathisers, knowing that all that he did, all that he said, would appear right in her eyes, gave him infinite delight; while at the same time he knew that just as it pleased him he could make the red lips tremble or the big eyes glisten. Little wonder that never before had Medwyn been so content! And so the time went on, and he enjoyed and Laurie loved.

* * * * * * *

"I wish you you would tell me what is the matter."

Medwyn and Laurie were together in the pretty Kensington drawing-room; and the girl asked the question in the gentle fearless fashion that Medwyn found so dangerously attractive.

He was looking worried—almost cross—on this occasion—very different from his usually serene self; and now, as he paced up and down the room, for the first time his voice did not relax at the sound of her voice.

"Do tell me what it is that troubles you?" repeated Laurie.

Medwyn had come to a standstill in front of the low easy chair in which she was resting, and she raised her hand to touch his own with a gentleness that was almost a caress.

"Who has been worrying you?" she asked again.

Medwyn's answer was heralded by a bitter little laugh.

"'Tormenting' would be a better word than 'worrying,' Laurie. But don't look so anxious, dear; it is only a fresh quarrel with my wife."

"With your——" Every vestige of color faded from Laurie's face as she rose slowly to her feet. "Your what?" she asked hoarsely. "Say that again."

"With my wife," replied George Medwyn sadly.

Long afterwards, when those summer months were nothing but a half-faint memory, Medwyn could still recall the scene. The pretty room with open windows, the long lace curtains gently moved by the breeze, the various knick-knacks strewn about the room, the masses of flowers, even the prevailing shade of the foliage—he could recall it all; and then in the midst of such peaceful surroundings, a slight childish figure clad in a clinging white gown—his little friend Laurie Heath.

She stood perfectly motionless, white as her dress, and the breath came in quick gasps through her parted lips; and, looking down on her with wide open eyes, Medwyn was genuinely startled.

Against his will she somehow reminded him of a little sister of his whom years before he had nursed when dying; and, terribly frightened he sprang forward.

"Laurie, Laurie! Oh, my darling, don't look like that! Didn't you know?"

"Didn't I know?" echoed the girl slowly—and even at that moment it struck him how old her voice had suddenly become. "How should I know?"

Medwyn moved uneasily.

All through these summer months he had been so happy in this child's companionship that only very rarely had it occurred to him as strange that she, who spoke to him of everything, never mentioned his wife.

As she said nothing, neither did he think himself called upon to speak of her; and now it flashed upon him for the first time that Laurie might never have heard of his marriage.

"Every one knows?" he said lamely; and a sad little smile gathered round Laurie's lips.

"Every one knows? How do they know it?" she asked.

"The papers," answered Medwyn bitterly. "Do you think it is possible for a man in my position to have any trouble in his family without the whole town ringing with it? Two years ago it began. We disagreed about something—a mere trifle—I forget what—and I read the next week that a divorce was imminent." He laughed a little. "So how could I guess you did not know? He held out both his hands towards her, and a softer tone crept into his voice. "Little Laurie, you are not angry with me that I did not tell you this? You do not think me disloyal to our friendship?"

"You might have told me," said the girl piteously.

It was the one reproach she made him for the harm he had wrought her, but the words stung him to the quick.

"Laurie, Laurie," he cried again, "listen to me, dear! This mistake of mine makes no difference in our friendship?"

The girl stood still without answering; and, angry at the thought that his own folly might be the means of his losing her, he took the white face between his hands and forced her to look up at him.

"We are friends still?" persisted George Medwyn.

There was a moment's pause, and then the pretty lips quivered and Laurie burst into tears.

"Oh, don't—don't! It isn't fair!" she sobbed. "You know I love you exceedingly; and I must not now."

Poor Laurie! As Medwyn had told her once, she was a little more than a child, and now she broke down before this man who was so dear to her, and sobbed as if her heart would break.

"Laurie dear"—Medwyn's own eyes were wet, but he stood at a little distance from the couch upon which she had dropped, and his voice was quiet and steady—"don't talk like that. Try to think a moment. Why must you not love me? Friends always love each other."

"Yes; but it is not that!" cried the girl desperately. "Mr. Medwyn, you know that in my prayers I could not say what I am saying to you now, so you must not think me—horrid."

The shame and misery in the young voice touched his heart, but, oh, how pretty she appeared as she raised herself and sat on the couch, looking up at him with a wist'ul sclemn gaze!

"Why?"

"This is why,"—she said—"I did not know it until to-day—I love you so much that I must see you either very often or else not at all."

"Why?" asked Medwyn again, this time a little less steadily than before.

"Because it is not fair to Mrs. Medwyn," replied Laurie bravely; and the man flushed scarlet.

There was a long silence after that.

Had Laurie Heath been a woman instead of so young a girl, in all probability Medwyn would have launched into a bitter declaration that his honor was called into question by such an applied accusation, or, caring for her as he did then—a thousand times more just at that moment when he feared to lose her—he might have proposed Platonic friendship under a newer name; but to such a child what could he say? Laurie's complete innocence was unassailable.

There was no protestation, no upbraidings—she loved him too much, and it was not fair to his wife, was her simple statement. Perhaps it was the presence of such purity that brought George Medwyn's better angel to him as he stood silent after her last words.

"So I am to go away then?" he asked gently.

"Yes, please," replied Laurie, with a little tremor in the soft voice he knew he should miss so sadly. "And don't—oh, please don't think me ungrateful!"

"Never, dear, in all my life!" said Medwyn earnestly.

They were speaking very quietly, even while both felt, though in varying degrees all that was embraced in these last few minutes.

Just for a moment Medwyn held the girl's hands, just for a moment her wet eyes were raised to his, and then he turned away and left her standing in the darkening twilight.

* * * * * * *

George Medwyn sat reading the *Athenæum*, which contained a notice of his last new book. It was a tolerably long poem entitled "A Girl's Summer," and in it he had set forth all that he ever knew or imagined of Laurie Heath—all her quaint sweet fancies, her laughter and her tears, even the abrupt ending of her innocent life—for Laurie had died in the autumn—one and all, they had served him as material for his poem, and the book was a success.

"So sweetly sensitive, so chastely tender is our poet"—so ran the laudatory notice that he was reading—"that he brings tears to the eyes of all those who are sufficiently cultured and sympathetic to appreciate him."

Medwyn raised his eyes, which were literally flashing with delight. Appreciated! Yes, he was appreciated at last, and in the very way he would have chosen.

The daily papers had told its readers that "this writer has an immense capacity for suffering," and Medwyn had read the words with a complacent smile, thinking all the time how true it was; for, though the real Laurie Heath was but a rapidly vanishing memory, he was genuinely in love with this dream-Laurie, the Laurie of his poem, who was winning him such fame and he could not see the subtle difference.

When he had first heard of the girl's death he had grieved a good deal, though much less than he had fancied. She had died, he was told, of a neglected cold from which she had not the strength to rally; but Medwyn had his own ideas on that point.

He thought it very possible that it had been the will and not the strength that was lacking; and, though he had grieved for his little friend—was not this book a substantial proof of it?—he could not help acknowledging that it was a fit ending.

Laurie married—Laurie with a crowd of children clinging to her! Why, the very thought jarred on him—it seemed almost a desecration! But, as it was, what could be more beautiful or artistic? A year of love—a short summer of realized dreams—then the parting—lastly the death! Yes, it was all very beautiful; and Medwyn's sigh was lost in the smile with which he turned to his poem.

Suddenly he paused in his perusal of the *Athenæum's* flattering criticism and bit his lip.

Had something pained him? Was there a word of sufficient harshness to ruffle the "sweet sensitiveness" that his critic praised so highly? No; but in turning the leaf his eyes had fallen on the date, and it happened to be the anniversary of Laurie's death.

Laurie's death! Yes; and he had never once remembered it. That was all.

In a Watch.

BY BERTIE BAYLE.

I HAD BEEN at a hotel at Sunnyport for a week, when, in walking about the town, I came across a rambling, picturesque old house, standing a little way from the street, and nearly hidden from sight by a tangle of woodbine, honeysuckle, and climbing roses. It interested me at once, and the following day I went still nearer, and tried in vain to catch a glimpse of some of its inmates. That there were such I was confident, for the windows were opened, and at once seemed that the rose, in withering, must fall upon the floor within.

At the side, looking towards the sea, I noticed that the blinds were closed in an upper room, and the vines running riot in and out among their slats showed that there had been no attempt at opening them for at least this summer.

A longing to open something of the interior of the old house proved irresistible, and, returning to the hotel, I made inquiries concerning it, and was told that it was owned by an elderly widow, a Mrs. Owen, who, with her granddaughter and one or two servants, were the only occupants. Mrs. Owen's son was in business away from the town, and, since the death of his wife—who had been a French girl—his only child had been left in the care of her grandmother.

Did they ever take boarders? Well—yes, and no. There had been one only a few years ago, but since her tragic end, probably no one had cared to board there—at least, no one had done so.

My interest in the unknown lady was straightway excited, but just then my informant was called away; and a little later, with a hope born of her words, I started out towards the old house once more, to find if, by any chance, Mrs. Owen might consent to take another boarder. The desire for a favorable answer increased as I proceeded through the grounds, that wore an unmistakable air of neglect; but there was none the less a charm about the grass-grown driveway, the hedges overrun with a luxuriance of honey-suckle, whose sweet breath floated down to me as I approached it.

A piazza ran round the front and one side of the house, and, as I went up the broad worn steps, I heard a clear voice singing a French song.

"The half-French granddaughter," I supposed, lifting the tarnished knocker, which was of so studiedly frightful a design as to look almost modern.

The singing ceased, and a moment later there came, not from within, but from the shelter of the woodbine, a little butterfly of a maiden of some fifteen or sixteen years, with dancing dark eyes and glowing cheeks.

Her dainty white apron was filled with roses, and she held up one corner coquettishly to keep from falling, as she came up to me with a pretty little curtesy, and waited for me to speak.

"Is Mrs. Owen in?" I asked.

"Yes, Madame, she is in," was the answer. "Did Madam wish to see her?"

And as Madame did wish to see her, she was invited to a room quite in keeping with the exterior of the old house.

My interview with Mrs. Owen was most satisfactory, and Annette, the granddaughter, whom I had already seen, was called to show me the chambers, that I might select from among them.

After the round was made, I had nearly decided to take one overlooking the old garden, I remembered that I had not been shown the one with closed blinds which faced the sea, so I said, "I am fond of the water; have you not a room looking out upon it? I thought as I came along that the corner would be pleasant, though the blinds were closed, I believe."

Annette's bright eyes gave a quick, searching glance before she said, "Ah! Madame wants not that room."

"And why?"

"It is the haunted chamber."

"I do not understand you," I returned.

Annette looked up wonderingly.

"Has Madame, then, not heard of the poor lady, Rowena?"

No, I had not heard of her.

"Then Madame has much to hear."

"Was that chamber her room?" I asked; and at length, notwithstanding the fact that it was given over to a phantom, Annette unlocked the door, and I was allowed to enter and open the long-closed blinds, the girl meanwhile standing on the threshold, ready to start away at any sight or sound bordering on the supernatural.

But nothing of the kind was seen or heard, and after an examination of the room and the views from the window, I made known my wish to appropriate the apartment, with whatever phantoms it might produce, and Annette, with a gay little ripple of laughter, returned, "Madame is quite welcome to all the phantoms she can find."

In due time I took possession of the room, and became a member of that already incongruous household. There was Mrs. Owen, with her quiet ways, faded face, and soft gray hair; pretty little Annette, and Jake and Susanna, a middle-aged man and his wife, who, in their own opinion, at least, had been the mainstay of the Owens for the last ten years. But Annette and I were friends both before and until long after I became acquainted with the story of Rowena."

Two or three years before my first visit at Sunnyport, there had been among other guests at the hotel a gentleman and his daughter from London, the former quiet, dignified, pleasant-faced, and in most respects giving way to the wishes of his daughter, a wilful little beauty just out of her teens.

And Rowena Sprague was charmed with the quaint old town, its broad streets leading to unexpected nooks and corners, and the shimmering stretch of blue waters beyond. One walk, in particular, became a favorite with her; it led past the Owen residence, away from the street, and down a pathway shaded by oak and pine to the water's edge: not to the beach, where other paths would take them, but to a cliff rising perpendicularly from the water.

The July days were spent by Rowena in walks and drives, in watching the fishing smacks and pleasure boats that dotted the bay, in floating dreamily over the waters, sometimes drifting idly with the tide, or setting out in a gay little yacht for a day's picnicking at an island further down the harbor.

The young girl was the inspirer of most of these occasions, and the life of the little parties who enjoyed them, and when July gave place to August, and her father said, "Shall we not go on to the mountains, or home?" She answered, "Not just yet, please; it is so quiet here, so unlike the life we live at home, that I am another person, and one I enjoy more than my old self."

So through the hazy autumn days they stayed on.

One of the other visitors at the hotel was a young artist, Felix Ware, who had yet to make for himself both fame and fortune, if such he were ever to possess.

He had the delicate, sensitive features and dreamy brown eyes of the ideal artist, with a touch of that careless grace which only heightened their effect.

He had been sketching in and round Sunny-port for a few days before Mr. Sprague and his daughter arrived, and immediately his artist's eye was caught by the symmetry and exquisite coloring of Rowena Sprague's form and complexion.

There were few other people in the house at the time, and as they became acquainted, it seemed quite natural that she should become his companion in many of his sketching trips about the town or down the harbor, her father usually accompanying them.

For a time, the man failed to see that the secret of the charm the artist and his daughter professed to find in the old town was really in each other, but as the time went on, he surmised the truth.

Felix Ware sketched the young girl's face, and painted it over and over again; but it was hard to find a shade to match the golden hair, to give the right expression to the curve of the red lips, or the glance of the violet eyes.

After one of his most satisfactory attempts he showed the result to her, at which she only laughed, and declared that he had not done her justice.

He looked from the painting to the merry, mocking face of the girl before him, and answered, slowly, "I have not done you justice. No one could."

But he did not destroy the picture.

Rowena was with him when he sketched the Owen residence, with its vine-colored piazza and porticos, and when from the cliff he drew the green little island down the harbor.

During one of these mornings he had told her what indeed there was no need of words to tell, so well she was assured of it, but in response she had said, "You are mistaken, Mr. Ware; you admire me as you do any other subject for a picture, but this is all; and as for me,"—"I am still in maiden meditation, fancy free."

Felix did not answer; he only looked at her so gravely that she laughed again, and lightly and spoke of something else.

But a few days later, as they were coming home from the cliff, he said, suddenly, "Rowena, you know it is true what I told you, and you do love me?"

She turned to him with white anger and

surprise.

"You can think as you like," she said; "it makes no difference to me."

"It makes no difference." He repeated the words as though hardly comprehending them, and after a pause said: "Then I am going away soon—to-morrow. I shall never see you again—unless you tell me to stay."

He waited for her to speak, but she did not, and he asked—

"Shall I go?"

"Yes," she answered; "go."

The following morning Rowena said to her father—

"Mr. Ware is going away to-day; he is to sail to Southgate; let us go and see him off."

The man was somewhat surprised, but his daughter spoke in so matter-of-fact a tone that he thought there could be no trouble anywhere, so together they started down the shaded pathway to the cliff, and as they reached it, a small sail-boat, in which sat Felix Ware and a boy was already floating over the sparkling water.

Perhaps he expected Rowena to be at the cliff, for he turned towards it as she stood there.

She drew out her handkerchief and waved it to him—he answered the signal, and looked for a moment away. With a sudden impulse the girl started and called his name, and standing at the edge of the rock, stretched out her arms towards him.

"Felix, come back!"

Whether he heard the call they knew not, but certain it was he turned again towards them, and standing in the boat, waved his hat high above his head.

Rowena hardly spoke as she and her father went back to the hotel, but a new look was in her face.

A man from Southgate was to bring up the boat that night, and as Mr. Sprague made some mention of the fact, Rowena said, "Perhaps Felix will come too."

But they had to wait till night to know; before that time the news spread through the town that the young artist, on his way to Southgate, had been overtaken by a sudden squall, the boat had capsized, and it was thought he must have been stunned, as he was not seen to make any movement towards saving himself, but had sunk before anyone could go to the rescue.

The boy swam ashore, and told the story, which was brought to Rowena that afternoon.

A year passed, and again the Sunnyport hotel was filled with visitors.

Among them was Rowena Sprague, this time without her father.

The bright color was gone from her cheeks, the laugh from her eyes, where only a restless, glittering light remained.

She often walked down to the Owen residence, and one day asked if she could be accommodated with board at the latter place.

It was readily granted her, for Annette was charmed with the beautiful lady, and Mrs. Owen was glad for her granddaughter to have a companion younger than herself.

Only Susanna shook her head sadly from the first, with the declaration, "The blessed lamb has lost his wits!"

The painful fact was soon evident to all, but she was very quiet, giving little trouble, and so she remained at the Owens'.

She would sit looking from the windows of her room out over the way, and when any boat approached the pier would go down. "For I think Felix will come," was what she always said. Returning slowly, if any spoke to her, she looked up absently, and then said, "He did not come to-day, but to-morrow I am sure will bring him."

Yet to-morrow and to-morrow came and passed, and still she looked in vain.

One day Susanna said to her, "Like enough he's give up comin,' honey."

Rowena looked at her wonderingly a moment, then she returned. "You don't understand. Felix will come—he said so, if I called him.

Susanna wiped the tears from her eyes as she turned away, and no more was said about his not coming.

When a storm came on, Rowena was more restless, and walked from one window to another, sometimes going out and down to the cliff—coming back with her garments drenched with the rain and dashing spray.

She remained at Mrs. Owen's through the summer, and until October's brilliant foliage gave place to leafless branches against November's leaden sky.

She spoke but little with the people in the house, but often in passing her room they would hear her talking to herself, and sometime a burst of laughter rang out that had in it nothing of merriment, but was sadder far than her silence.

One day early in November there had been rain since morning; it dashed fitfully against the windows now and then, and all but Rowena was glad to stay within doors. Towards night the wind rose higher, and the thick walls of the old house failed to shut out the sound of its moaning, or the deeper sounding of the sea.

Rowena had been more restless than usual through the day, and had been out several times, in spite of Susanna's remonstrances.

"He is coming—Felix is surely coming to-day," was what she answered the woman as she went on not seeming to notice the wind or rain.

About dusk, as Jack was passing through the gardens, he heard her voice, and paused to look up. She stood by her open window; her long, bright hair was loosened, and fell around her unheeded as she looked off over the sea.

"Yes, he is coming—coming!" Jack heard her say. "I knew he would come to-day!" Then her voice rose higher. "I will meet him at the cliff," she cried, and disappeared from the window.

A few moments later, Jack saw her come to the piazza and run down the steps towards the street. He called her but she did not notice, and, with a vague foreboding, he started to follow.

She went rapidly on, taking the pathway to the cliff. Once or twice the sound of her voice was blown back to him, and when, nearly breathless, he approached the rock, Rowena stood on the verge, her arms stretched out as they had been once before.

"I knew you would come!" Her voice was glad, exultant, and there was a moments pause before she cried again, "You call me, Felix! Yes, I am coming!"

A moment more, and, before Jack could reach her, she was gone. Where? But too well he knew the only answer.

A few hours later, the body was found. The violet eyes were closed forever, and the bright hair clung around her like a winding-sheet. She was buried up by the little church.

Strangers often heard her story, and visited her grave; but Susanna, with a superstition that could not be overcome, affirmed that when a storm came on, if she passed the poor lady's room, she could still hear the sound of a voice, broken now and again by a peal of wild laughter. So the chamber was closed, and left to itself.

* * * * *

About a year after my visit to Sunnyport while traveling between London and Manchester, the seat opposite me was occupied by a grave, gray-haired gentleman whom for a while I regarded with only the half-conscious interest one feels for a stranger seen in this way; but as he opened his watch to learn the hour, I noticed in the brief glance I had time to give it, a picture in the chasing opposite the face of the watch and at the sight I started with a new, sudden interest in the gray haired man. Eagerly I waited for him to open his watch again which, after some half or three-quarters of an hour, he did, and then I reached forward.

"Pardon me, sir," I said, "but the pictured face you have in your watch is a familiar one to me."

He turned in surprise.

"Is it possible?" he said.

For answer, I took from my bag a little painting of Rowena Sprague, one given me by Mrs. Owen, and which had been done by Felix Ware, and reached it to him. He regarded it a moment in silence, then in a voice of suppressed emotion, said:

"Madam, tell me, where did you get this? It is the face of my daughter."

Of course I told him what there was to tell, and it was partly from him, partly from gay little Annette, that I heard the story of Rowena.

THE "THEN" AND "NOW."

I AM so busy to-day," said the little country wife, as her machine whirled, "that I sha'n't stop to get dinner. I'll just open and warm up some essence of coffee on my oil stove. Dear me! how much there is to do in this world! I never have a minute to spare!"

And indeed it does seem so, at times, to all of us, and those who have talked to very old people about the days of our grandmothers must wonder how the housekeeper of those days completed all her tasks, and will not wonder that the delicate women were so apt to die young.

For a woman in moderate circumstances the daily tasks began when she awoke and called the maids or her daughters, usually by candle-light. And if the fire had not been carefully "covered" over night, the first operation was striking a light with flint and steel and tinder-box.

A spark must fall on the tinder, and from this a spiral shaving could be lighted. Sometimes the tinder was damp; sometimes the wood was "green;" sometimes even an adept at spark-striking grew nervous, and there was nothing for it but to go to some neighbor and borrow a shovel of coal.

We once heard of an old lady who kept her tinder-box as a souvenir of the greatest trial of her early housekeeping days, and who always declared that there was never so glorious an invention as the "lucifer match."

To light a fire without flint and steel seemed almost a miracle; and it is said that there were pious folk whose fancy associated the lucifer matches so closely with his satanic majesty, that they did not feel it quite right to use them for many years.

Almost everything used for food and clothing was raised on the place. The cloth was spun and woven, and made into bed-clothes, or wearing apparel for men, women, and children by the house-mother, in addition to all her cooking and washing for the family and the hired men.

Her household maid was just as often as not a neighbor's daughter (out of a family where there were plenty of girls), who was quite willing to "take hold and do." But she must be treated with "respect," or she rode away on her high horse, with the remark that, not being obliged to live out, and only doing it to accommodate a friend, she didn't intend to put up with any impudence. It was the mistress of the home who was obliged to "put up" with that sort of thing at busy times.

People did close and careful needlework in those days. Nobody dared to slight anything. There is a tradition that visitors examined the quilting of the covering of the bed on which they laid their bonnets, and caressed the "dear children" in order to see if their mammas had "taken two threads and left four" in stitching the gathers of their little baby waists.

And the visitors! One's soul quails at the thought of what visitors could be in those days. Anyone you knew felt herself authorized to arrive at your house at ten o'clock in the morning, armed with knitting work, to sit awhile; and though she might be almost a stranger and entirely uncongenial, no housekeeper who respected herself could fail to urge her to stay and dine.

Dinner being over, it was incumbent on the hostess to urge staying to tea; and after tea the torment must be urged warmly to stay all night. Declaring she "never dreamed of doing such a thing," the little parcel that lay beside her hat would prove to contain short gown and nightcap. And it was within the possibilities that the visitor might remain several days.

Things were polished it those days by hand rubbing with a waxed cloth every morning until mahogany grew darkly beautiful under its touch. Where there was silver it must shine.

The best table-cloth must be ironed so as to bring its figures out. Nothing could be shirked in homes invaded by critics who were experts in all household matters; and Mrs. B. would have felt like drowning herself in the well if Mrs. C. had been able to say she could write slattern with her finger in the dust on her furniture; an awful slander, common at that period.

And for all that work, many utensils—brooms, baskets, mops, &c.—were made at home, and people moulded their own candles for daily use. In fact, in all country places they made almost everything they wore or ate, and had no more expectation of a future in which everything could be bought ready-made than we have of travelling one day to the moon.

And if one had prophesied a time when a woman could light an oil stove and warm up a cup of coffee or tea, if she desired, or predicted the sewing machine, they would never have believed him.

Ah, yes! our grandmothers were busier that we are; there can be no doubt of that.

M. S.

SOUND TELEGRAPHY.—The system of sound telegraphy used by the people living on the border of the Gulf of Guinea, West Africa, is of interest as a primitive solution of the problem of communication though short distances. Bertram Sparhawk tells in the "Scientific American" how the instrument is made, as follows:—

Take a log of hard wood, about two feet long and a foot in diameter. Plane off one side longitudinally to a surface four or five inches wide. In the centre of this surface mark off an elongated and somewhat distorted Greek cross. The longer arms are placed longitudinally.

The transverse arms are three times as broad, and extend entirely across this surface. The natives dig out the wood within the outline of the cross, and from that point gradually hollow out the whole log. The sides, beginning at the centre, are trimmed off laterally toward the ends, which are rounded off. The instrument is now ready.

It will be perceived that by the method above described we have a hollow drum with four tongues in the centre, each being of a different thickness, so as to produce a different sound when struck.

Two pieces of bamboo, the size of a man's wrist and about two feet long, are selected and stripped of the hard outside, so as to leave the soft, pithy portion for use. This bamboo is of a peculiar kind, free from knots and solid throughout.

With these sticks used in a proper manner on the four tongues of the drum, a combination of sounds is produced, which, in connection with time as used in music, forms a perfect telegraphic language, readily understood by the initiated, the air being the transmitter.

With this simple instrument the natives of the Gulf of Guinea readily communicate with each other for a distance of at least a mile on land and over a much longer distance by wather.

Messages can be sent long distances in a short time by parties at different points passing them along from one to another. The writer has seen canoes coming down a river from the bush markets signalling people in the town and giving and receiving general news at a distance of fully three miles.

EXPLOSIVE EGGS.—A curious story comes from Yale College to the effect that an ostrich egg weighing about three pounds upon being pierced recently exploded in the hand of a scientific experimentalist.

It not only knocked him senseless, and wounded some of the bystanders, but blew out the windows, and removed an outhouse into the next field!

It appears, according to the source from which this story is taken, that such explosions are considered very common accidents upon the Chinese coast.

Occasionally a vessel leaves a port in the Celestial Empire containing a large supply of eggs, which in a week or two, begin to go bad in a strange fashion.

The moment the shell receives a crack, or is touched against another, it explodes.

For the first fourteen days of the voyage these explosions are rare, but they go off after that time at the rate of a dozen a minute, and resemble nothing so much as fire-works at a review.

This may be perfectly true; and doubtless if eggs of this description could be employed as missiles for electioneering purposes they would be very useful.

At the same time, it is hardly probable that any candidate for any constituency would care to have a three-pound African egg burst on the platform just before he made his peroration.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Since the recent earthquake shocks in Charleston, it appears that the health of that city has considerably improved. It is alleged that many people experienced decided physical benefit upon the occurrences of those shocks. These disturbances were generally accompanied by tingling sensations upon the ankles, legs, feet, and lower extremities, after which the sufferer felt relieved. One patient, who suffered sharply from rheumatism, was completely cured during the shocks; and another, who had for many years been depressed, nervous, and entirely unable to attend to business, regained his former activity and energy. Perhaps in the course of a few years the old-fashioned medical prescription, couched in quaint Latin, will be altogether superseded by a modern formula, and will read, "The patient must take an earthquake every three days."

A funny story is being told of two Russian noblemen and a favorite Parisian actress. Both of the Russians were suitors for the lady's smiles, and both seemed to be equally esteemed by her. It appears that in Russia, as well as in many other countries, a lock of hair is considered a signal pledge of tender passion. Mdlle. Alice glories in the possession of auburn ringlets, and would not part with one of them for less than a duchy. Her Russian admirers, the Count de L. and the Baron de M., both happened to have hair of the same golden hue as that of their common love. Each begged a tress of her hair in exchange for a lock of his own; to which the charming creature readily assented; and, without touching a single hair of her head, cunningly managed to effect an exchange of parcels by which each gentleman received a curl of his rival's capillaries. The count now wears the baron's hair next his heart, and the baron sleeps with the count's scalp-lock under his pillow.

An analysis of the English marriage returns for the past twelve months shows some curious and interesting facts. Decade by decade the marrying age in England appears to be advancing. Men who, during the past generation, proposed at the age of five-and-twenty now allow themselves to be five-and-thirty before they ask a woman to be their wife. The earliest to marry are miners, factory hands, laborers, and artisans, the great majority of whom take upon themselves the responsibilities of matrimony before they attain their majority in many cases. This means that they are courting when they are sixteen or seventeen years old, and therefore, that they contribute to the solidarity and wealth of the State at a period of life when those, supposititiously above them in status, are living a somewhat selfish and indolent single life. Shoemakers, tailors, and shopkeepers come next, most of this class marrying before they are five-and-twenty years old. Next come commercial clerks, and, curiously enough, farmers, who ponder over life's most serious and responsible step a little longer.

As regards wealth the United States ranks first among the nations of the world. In revenue, France, Great Britain and Ireland and Germany are ahead of her, placing this country fourth. In expenditure she ranks eighth. In the amount of debt, France, the United Kingdom, Russia and Italy are far ahead of this country. In regards to commerce only three nations, the United Kingdom, Germany and France are ahead of us. The United States have more miles of railroad and telegraph lines than any other nation. The army of the United States, if placed on a war footing, would be excelled in numbers by only one nation in the world—France. On a peace footing the army of this country ranks below Russia, Italy, China, France, Germany, Austria, India, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Spain, Switzerland, Holland, Mexico, Belgium, Sweden, Japan, Denmark, Portugal, the Dutch East Indies, and Persia. Thus, by a single anomaly, the richest country in the world, keeps a smaller standing army than the Dutch East Indies and many impoverished and unimportant countries. She has no effective coast fortifications, and only three modern ships of war.

The Interstate Commerce Bill is the result of an earnest effort on the part of Congress to set some metes and bounds favoring the right of the public touching the vast railway traffic of this country. It requires that all charges for the transportation of freight and passengers shall be "reasonable and just." It prohibits preference of, or discriminations against, persons or localities by "special rate, rebate, draw back or other device." I forbids "a greater gross charge" for a short than a long haul of freight or passengers over the same line "under substantially similar circumstances." It prohibits "pooling" by competing lines. Each company must make its rates public, and give ten days' notice of any change. For violations of the law each corporation is liable. Persons injured may obtain damages and the officers be fined. A board of five commissioners is to inquire into the management of railway corporations, investigate complaints and move in the courts against such as do not heed its decisions. In some respects this bill might have been amended, but it is certainly an effort in the right direction. Those who have not given attention to the subject can have but little idea of the arbitrary and outrageous injustice that has been suffered by business men in the matter of freight transportation.

Our Young Folks.

HUNGRY HOLLOW.

BY H. B. D.

JOHNNIE, what's Father Christmas like?"

"Dunno; I never seed him," Johnnie replied fretfully, "but he must be a bad old man, for it's always cold and frost and snow and miserable when he comes."

"That's because he don't like Hungry Hollow way," Kitty said, thoughtfully. "'Tisn't a nice place, is it?"

"No, it isn't: it's horrid," Johnnie replied, energetically.

"Then why do we live here?" Kitty questioned. "Why don't we live upon the cliff, where the sun shines all day, and the gardens are full of fruit and flowers, and have nice curtains on the windows? And why doesn't granny ever get us anything nice to eat? I should like a big slice of bread and treacle, Johnnie, white bread and brown-black treacle!"

"I'd sooner have jam," Johnnie said, with a very superior air. "When I grow up to be a man, I'll go to sea like father, and I'll bring you home lots of good things, a basket full of cakes and nuts, and pies and tarts too, Kitty."

"Yes, but it 'll be a long time before you grow as big as father, and I'm so hungry now," Kitty said, dolefully," and so cold also."

The poor little lassie shivered as she drew closer to the few smouldering pieces of wood on the hearth, and spread her blue, pinched little fingers over the embers.

She was only six, and such a tiny mite, with a wise, careworn little face, great dark eyes that always looked hungry and eager, and a quantity of rough yellow hair tumbled over her forehead.

Johnnie, her brother, was eight, two years older than Kitty, though he did not look much bigger or stronger.

The two children were alone in the cottage. Their grandmother, with whom they lived, had been out since the early morning trying to earn some money by selling holly in the neighboring town for Christmas decorations.

They were very, very poor, for old Mrs. Bruce was almost crippled with rheumatism, and the children were too young to do anything but pick up wood and chips to keep them warm while the grannie was out all day seeking for work.

The children's mother was dead, and their father, a sailor, had sailed for China nearly three years before.

For twelve months he sent home the greater part of his pay regularly to his mother, for the support of his children, but a ship was supposed to have been lost in the China seas, with every soul on board, and Mrs. Bruce and her two grandchildren gave up struggle on as best they possibly could.

One by one many little comforts vanished from their cottage, and at last they were forced to leave it, as they could no longer pay their rent, and move to a wretched tumbled down little cottage not much bigger than a hut, in a low, marshy, unhealthy spot, about a mile from the village.

It was called Hungry Hollow because the people who lived there were always hungry, and too poor to live anywhere else.

On that particular Christmas Eve Johnnie was in very bad spirits. The snow was too deep for gathering sticks, and only a few remained in the corner, just enough to make a blaze to warm poor grannie when she came home cold and weary.

In the afternoon there came a sudden driving shower of sleet, and as the crazy door of the cottage blew open, a gentleman was running to seek shelter.

"May I stand inside till the storm passes?" he said, in a kind, cheerful voice, as Johnnie politely pointed to the only chair they took.

The gentleman sat down, and looked around him curiously. He seemed surprised at the utter misery of the place, and by a few skilful questions learned all their little history.

Kitty grew confidential at once, and told him her thoughts about Father Christmas, and her wonder as to what he was like.

"Have you never seen him then?" the gentleman asked Kitty.

"No, he don't care to come to this place, it's too cold," Kitty said decidedly.

"He loves nice places and good things. He visits poor places too, sometimes, and comforts little children that are cold and hungry, if they're good," said the gentleman pleasantly; perhaps he may pay you a visit to-night."

"Does he ever have tea?" Johnnie asked eagerly. "Oh, if he does come perhaps he will bring grannie some tea!"

After a few minutes the storm passed over, the gentleman said "good-bye," and promised, if he met Father Christmas anywhere on the road, to send him as once to Hungry Hollow, and not forget some tea for grannie.

A few hours there was great excitement in the schoolroom at the mansion [illegible] preparing to go three miles [illegible] in the cold and [illegible] little [illegible]

"I will play the part of Father Christmas, Eric," he said to his eldest son, a merry, middle-aged gentleman. "Get the biggest bag or basket you can find, and you, Amy, go with mother to the larder and see what she can give you."

"Me wants to do somethings too," little Kitty cried: "me put my tea [illegible]

Such hurrying and whispering and suggesting and rushing about, such sallies to the kitchen and larder and jam-closet, such turning out of wardrobes in search of warm frocks and shoes and socks for Kitty, such peals of merry laughter, as Eric put on his white beard, and high-crowned hat, and threw a large cloak over his shoulders, and marched up and down the room with a bag on his back, threw it down on the middle of the floor, and showed them how he would act as Father Christmas.

Just in the twilight Eric set off on his visit to Hungry Hollow, accompanied by a servant to carry the bag till he got near the cottage, for it was too heavy even for his strong young shoulders.

There was a faint gleam of light from the little window, for grannie had returned, and the last few sticks were blazing to warm her chilled fingers.

Both the children were cowering over the blaze, one on each side of her, when they were startled by a loud knock at the door, and a gruff voice said—

"Does Mrs. Bruce live here?" At the same moment the latch was lifted, and in stepped such a figure as the children had never even imagined, much less seen, before. An old, old man with snowy hair, a snowy beard, a long cloak covered with snow, and such a bag on his shoulder. The children and grannie all stared in sheer amazement as the contents of the bag were laid on the table one after another, the old saying all the time in a deep voice, "Christmas presents for all! Merry Christmas for all!"

When the bag was quite empty, he put the little packet of money into grannie's hand, and hurried away without waiting for a word of thanks.

When at last all the good things were examined, the children laughed and danced about, and then cried with delight at having actually seen Father Christmas.

Of course grannie knew better, but she did not explain to the children just then, only desired them to be sure when they said their prayers, to thank God for having sent them such a kind friend in their sore need.

The next day Eric and his father went down to Hungry Hollow, and then grannie found her tongue, and thanked Mr. Bertram so nicely, that he felt sure she was a respectable old body, and resolved to do something to help her, and perhaps find something for little Johnnie to do in the garden in the spring, and Kitty was to go to school.

And while they were talking about these things who should arrive but the postman. It took him a long time to reach Hungry Hollow that morning, he had so many Christmas cards to deliver.

But it was not a card he brought to old Mrs. Bruce, but a letter from a long lost son, who had been shipwrecked in the China seas, and kept a prisoner for a long time, but was now free and on his way home.

Then, indeed, there was joy and gladness in the cottage, and grannie's old eyes grew bright, and her rheumatism seemed to vanish as if by magic, as she bustled about to make everything neat for father, and when he came, and Mr. Bertram found that he was a steady, industrious man, he offered him a situation on one of his farms, with a neat comfortable cottage to live in. William Bruce accepted the situation gratefully, for he had had quite enough of the sea.

Soon they left Hungry Hollow; and now the children go to school, grannie sits by the fire in her old easy chair and knits socks all day, which Mr. Bertram manages to dispose of for her.

William Bruce is becoming quite a trusted servant, and they all date their happiness from the day that Master Eric came as Father Christmas to Hungry Hollow.

THROUGH THE SNOW.

BY F. E. ELSON.

GOOD-BYE, Jack: take care of Harold and yourself too. I don't half like your going to school this afternoon."

"Don't you be afraid, mother," replied Jack, cheerily. "You can see there is no more snow to come, and I might lose the prize if I stopped at home. Charlie Moore is sure to go. Good-bye, mother."

So the boys trudged off side by side, and after watching them out of the garden, Mrs. Barton turned away from the window and tried to think all was right.

A severe snowstorm had come on during the night, and she had kept the boys at home from school during the morning; but Jack begged so hard to be allowed to go in the afternoon that his mother did not like to refuse.

Lessons were ended at four, and the master hurried the boys off.

"No, no," he cried, as several snowballs were thrown, "do that to-morrow morning. It is getting dark, and if the snow came on again some of you might get into trouble. Now then, Jack Barton, are you not ready? You have farther to go than any one. Don't go across the fields: the road is a little farther, but it is safer."

Half a dozen boys accompanied the Bartons to the cross-roads, then all set off in different directions, and the two brothers went on alone.

"How merry his mother cried Harold [illegible] jump!"

Before many minutes had passed the few flakes had grown into a regular curtain of snow, which seemed to entirely hide everything.

"Here is the stile," said Jack, stopping suddenly. "I really think we ought to go this way, as it saves quite a quarter of a mile."

"Mr. White said we had better not," replied Harold. "Yet it does seem a pity, for it is almost a straight line to our house."

"And mother is sure to put the lamp to guide us, as she always does after dark," added Jack, putting one foot on the stile.

So the silly boys scrambled over, and began walking across the field. In less than ten minutes they found out their mistake. They sank above their boots at every step, and the footprints which had been visible in the morning were now filled up with snow, even if the darkness of night had not already come on.

"We had better go back to the road," said Harold, half sobbing.

"Don't cry old boy, we will get out of this in no time."

The tone was cheery enough, but Jack's heart sank when, after turning around and plodding through the snow for some time, he was obliged to own that he could not find the stile.

Just then a piercing scream sounded through the darkness. It finished up poor Harold's stock of courage, and he clung to his brother in an agony of fear.

What could the poor boys do? Thick darkness surrounded them, and a perfect storm of snow was falling which threatened to cover them entirely if they stood still for any length of time.

"Cheer up, Harold. Let us walk straight on; we must get to the hedge at last."

Have you ever tried to walk with your eyes bandaged? Put a lighted candle on a table, go to the end of the room, stand exactly in a line with the table, then tie up your eyes and try to blow out the candle. You will find it a difficult matter.

How much more difficult, then, to go straight on in a field deep with snow, and pitch dark?

"There's the light," cried Harold, presently. "I told you mother would put it ready."

The hope put new life into the children's weary limbs, and they plodded on towards the light, little thinking where it was leading them.

They had only gone a few yards when another cry for help rang through the air. It was so close that Jack instinctively drew back a step or two, but he recovered his courage quickly.

"What geese we are, Harold," he said. "Somebody is in trouble; I believe it was a girl's voice. Let us see if we can find her," and putting his hands to his mouth, he shouted out as loudly as he could, "where are you?"

The only answer was another cry for help, but the blinding snow so deadened the sound, that it was impossible to say how far off the speaker was.

"We must try to find her Harold. I believe some girl has fallen down. We are boys, you know, and there are two of us; shall we try to save her?"

Harold's only answer was to cling more tightly to his brother's hand.

Jack felt that he was to blame for the danger they were in, and being a noble-hearted boy, he longed to save his brother and to rescue the unknown person, whose cries grew feebler and feebler.

He was tired enough himself, but he made a desperate effort, choked back the tears which would rise in his eyes, and said firmly—

"Harold, suppose it is Maggie who has come to meet us and fallen down!"

The words acted like magic on the younger boy.

"Let us go; only do keep the lamp in sight," he said.

Hand in hand the brothers stepped on through the snow, but suddenly they came to a standstill. With a loud cry of terror Jack fell to the ground with one leg in water.

"It is the mill stream, Harold," he cried. "We have been following the light at the mill. Hold me tight, Harold, or I shall fall in."

The current was so strong that it required an effort to drag even one leg out of it. The boys were so absorbed with their misfortunes, that they did not notice that it had left off snowing, neither did they remember the unknown stranger, till they heard another feeble cry for help. Young as Harold was, he realized now what might be the matter.

"Perhaps some one else has got into the stream," he said. "Look! it has left off snowing; perhaps we shall be able to find her now."

"We must not walk here, though. Let us feel our way with our hands."

So they felt their way, crawling by the side of the stream, till Jack's hand touched a face.

"What can we do, what can we do?" cried Jack.

Then with an enormous effort he dragged first one leg and then the other out of the stream, and then sank fainting by the woman he had rescued.

Poor little Harold, after trying in vain to rouse his brother, shouted and screamed with all his might. His voice traveled farther now that the snow-storm had ceased, and before long the miller and his son arrived with lanterns.

"Oh, it's Master Jack," pleaded Harold. "Jack has killed himself."

As he spoke the light flashed full into [illegible] woman's face, and Harold [illegible] could not help crying, "It's mother!"

It was a very [illegible] dinner for a few [illegible] but even the brandy which the [illegible] with him restored Mrs. [illegible] consciousness.

It was not till they were safe in their own home that the children learned that their mother had grown anxious about them, and started to meet them across the field. She had missed the path, and but for Jack's bravery would probably have died from exposure to the icy water. As it was, she was laid up for some time; and whenever Jack noticed her pale face he used to think to himself—

"If I had only kept to the right path we should have been home by the usual time, and mother would not have started to meet us."

SAVED BY A SONG.

IN a far away Tyrolese valley lived little Elsa, in a log chalet, alone with her old grandfather. Frowning precipices encircled the narrow strip of meadow that bordered the rushing stream flowing from the giants of snow and rock towering into the sky all around.

But old Franz was getting old, and Elsa had to help him to till the little plots of Indian corn and millet round the chalet, and when the sheaves were ripe, to hang them up to dry upon wooden staves with branching arms, which made the fields look as if peopled with scarecrows.

She had to drive the cows to the upland pastures and to make the cheeses which, every week, old Franz carried in a basket on his back down the valley, to sell at the nearest village.

But when her work was over, she would have been very dull in the evenings, while her grandfather sat and dozed in his arm-chair, but for the companionship of her pet bullfinch, with his glossy head and back, and his brick-dust-colored waistcoat.

The grandfather had brought him back as a present to Elsa, when he was quite a young bird, and the latter's kindness soon tamed him so that he would eat out of her hand.

Then his education began; and on long winter evenings, when the wind roared through the forest and the river raged past the hut, old Franz would pull out his clarionet, and by the light of the wood fire teach Bullie to pipe.

After much time and patience had been expended on him, one day, to his little mistress's delight, he whistled through the Austrian National Hymn, "God save Franz the Emperor," without a mistake.

Elsa was never dull now, for there was always some new tune to be taught Bullie, and she and the bird became inseparable. And thus, when one Sunday morning, early, she and her grandfather, both of them dressed in their best, started over the mountain to the feast at Imst, she tied up Bullie's cage in a handkerchief, and took him with her.

The streets of Imst were crowded with peasants in holiday dress proceeding to the outdoor stage, where was performed the annual religious play.

The roof was the blue sky, the background the snow peaks; and Elsa sat and listened, open-mouthed, to the quaint mixture of Old Testament story and ancient legend.

Dinner followed at Frau Luia's, a cousin's, after which Bullie hopped out of the cage and went through his performances. His shrill notes rang out into the street, and Melchoir the peddler came, and taking him on his finger, listened critically.

Melchoir dealt in every sort of ware, and was a great traveler, knowing every village and valley in the district, and sometimes even going as far as Innsbruck or Munich.

"That's a fine bird of yours, Father Franz! I don't mind giving you ten florins for him! What do you say?"

Poor Elsa gave a little cry of dismay, but was relieved to hear her grandfather reply—

"Gold won't buy him, friend Melchior, thank you. He's my little maiden's pet."

A few weeks later winter set in, with unusual violence of storm and rain, and brought dire misfortune to Elsa.

Her grandfather was confined to bed with rheumatism, and the river rising suddenly in the night, and flooding the valley, carried off their crops, and drowned the two cows, their chief support.

The damp and anxiety made the old man so ill, that Elsa became quite anxious. Their food and their money were exhausted and there was no more milk to make cheeses for sale.

Elsa was at her wits' end what to do, when a cheery pipe from Bullie reminded her of Melchoir's words. If she sold the bird, she could procure medicine and food for her grandfather.

But it was a bitter wrench and the tears rolled down her cheeks, and wetted Bullie's glossy coat, as, taking him from his cage, she pressed him to her lips for a last kiss.

Then she told her grandfather she was off to Imst to buy provisions.

There was a lull in the storm, but the mountains were swathed in a cotton-wool-like fog, as the brave little maiden ascended the winding path.

Struggling on in terror, a rift in the midst showed her she was utterly lost, and on the brink of a yawning precipice.

Overcome with fatigue and fear, Elsa sank to the ground, hiding Bullie's cage under her cloak, and gave herself up for lost.

It was nearly nightfall when two wood-cutters, sent by her anxious grandfather to search for her, came groping their way through the fog, fearing the worst for her. Suddenly, through the awful stillness, a familiar sound struck on their ears, and the shrill notes of the Emperor's Hymn came ringing through the gloom.

It was Bullie piping away cheerily from beneath the warm shelter of his poor little mistress, whom they found lying unconscious in a most perilous spot.

Thus had the little bird saved Elsa's life!

I need not say that none ever dreamt again of selling the bullfinch.

THE KING'S HOMECOMING.

BY F. T.

"Oh, why are you waiting, children,
And why are you watching the way?"
"We are watching because the folks have said
The king comes home to-day—
The king on his prancing charger,
In his shining golden crown,
Oh, the bells will ring, the glad birds sing
When the king comes back to town."

"Run home to your mothers, children;
In the land is pain and woe,
And the king, beyond the forest,
Fights with the Paynim foe."
"But," said the little children,
"The fight will soon be past,
We fain would wait, though the hour be late,
He will surely come at last."

So the eager children waited
Till the closing of the day,
Till their eyes were tired of gazing
Along the dusty way;
But there came no sound of music,
No flashing golden crown;
And tears they shed as they crept to bed,
When the round red sun went down.

But at the hour of midnight,
While the weary children slept,
Was heard within the city
The voice of them that wept:
Along the moonlit highway
Towards the sacred dome,
Dead on his shield, from the well-fought field—
'Twas thus the king came home.

BIRTHPLACES OF THINGS.

The records of former or present local eminence in manufactures are scattered broadcast over the speech of everyday. Damask cloth and damask sword blades recall the fame of the skilled workmen of Damascus; gauze recalls that of the weavers of Gaza in Palestine; and muslin proclaims the industry of Mosul, on the Tigris.

Calicut in India and Nankeen in China have given names to cotton fabrics. Fustian, from Fustat, speaks of Egyptian industry, though our learned pundits are still doubtful whether carpet is a contraction of "Cairo tippet" or tapestry. Morocco, China, Japan, and Cashmere are the common names of their respective manufactures of leather, porcelain, lacquered work, and fine cloth.

Holland as a name of linen, and Hollands as a name for gin, tell their tale about the Netherlands. Cambrai and Arras, in the north of France, boast of their old skill in cambric and arras. All delft is not now made in Delft, in Holland, nor is all duffel spun at the place of that name near Antwerp, nor all shalloon at Chalons in France.

Sedan is as familiar for its cloth which is used to cover chairs as for the great capitulation of the Franco-Prussian army. Milliners and mantua makers had their headquarters in the Italian towns of Milan and Mantua; Irish frieze rivals the original stuff from Friesland, while coaches now derive nothing but their name from the Hungarian village of Kotsi. Pistols have taken the place of daggers that were once manufactured at Pictola, now Pistoja, in Italy; bilboes and Hudibras's "Toledo trusty" still remind us in our literature of the Spanish steel manufactories of Bilbao and Toledo; and we cannot call a shoemaker a cordwainer without remembering the old repute of the leather of Cordova.

Gingham and lockram have spread widely the names of their birthplaces, Guincamp and Locrenan in Brittany. The latter place is named after St. Renan, our St. Ronan.

More recently Bayonne has given name to the bayonet; Landau, in Bavaria, to the vehicle so designated; Carron, in Stirlingshire, to the carronade; Paramatta, in New South Wales, to the cloth so called; and Bouginal in Algiers, to bougies, or wax candles. Artesian wells abounded in the old French province of Artois, and still preserve its name.

Two others provinces, Champagne and Burgundy, are equally well preserved in the names of their distinctive yields of wines, despite all new-fangled departmental arrangements. Creature comforts of this kind have a strong tendency to cling to the place of their nativity, as is evidenced by Schiedam, the name of Dutch spirits; Cognac, that of French brandy; port, that wine from Oporto in Portugal; sherry, that from Xeres in spain; hock from Hochheim in Germany; Tokay, from that vineyard in Hungary, and so on. The Canary Islands are not more famous for their wines than for the birds that originally came from them.

Damascus, already noticed, comes again to the front in roses and damascene or damson plums; cherries and chestnuts carry us back to the ancient towns of Cerasus and Castana in Pontus, Asia; quinces have disguised their derivation from Gydonia, a town in ancient Crete, and peaches hide the original form of their name as the fruit of "the Persian tree."

Guelder roses are from Guelderland in Holland, and Bergamot pears from Bergamo in Italy. Galloway and Shetland are in every one's mouth as applied to ponies; Bantam, in Java, celebrates its breed of diminutive poultry.

Guinea, Turkey, and India are in high vogue in common speech, though their fame is partly won on false issues. Guinea has rightly given name to the now antiquated coin, because much gold was brought to the first Mints from the Gold Coast; and to guineafowls, which are indigenous to Africa; but guinea-pig is a misnomer. The name should be guiana-pig, for the animal was first brought from South America. Turkeys are wrongly referred to the country of that name, as they are by the French and Germans to India, for they are really indigenous to America.

Similarly all the aboriginal tribes of America were called by the early navigators Indians, from an imagined connection between America and India. Spa in Belgium claims the rights of paternity over all mineral wells. Orreries of the solar system, are so called from the first one having been constructed under the direction of Charles Boyle, Earl of Orrery, in County Cork.

Sandwiches are named from having been the favorite refreshment of the fourth Earl of Sandwich at the gaming table.

There is truly "a main mystery" in names, but he who would fully exhaust the subject would be sent as a bore to Coventry, whose vogue as a place of banishment has proved inexplicable to the most ingenious inquirers.

"THERE are persons who get a fixed and permanent feeling of tiredness of life. And so they ought," says a certain eminent physician. "They live for themselves—exist solely to gratify their sensual selves. They are an animated frivolity, an empty and irritating giggle, capable of little more than vacuous mirth, of loving blue china, or going to Saratoga, or ceaselessly spinning round on the whirligig of fashion. Their own essential littleness is the cause of their weariness; their frivolity is the mother of their exhaustion. 'Man,' said the ancient, 'is the measure of the universe;' therefore the less the man, the less his universe—the greater the man, the greater his universe."

Grains of Gold.

Self-love easily dupes conscience.

Happiness is not confined to any sphere of life.

Friendship is a golden coin that brightens with the using.

God never tempts men; He proves His chosen servants.

Great efforts from great motives is the best definition of a happy life.

The man with the most advice has always the least small change.

The terror of being thought poor has been the ruin of thousands.

The easiest labor is a burden to him who has no motives for performing it.

If we are God's children we need not fear the development of His providence.

What renders the vanity of others insupportable is that it wounds our own.

To license a wrong is to turn moral principle over to its enemies for crucifixion.

Were we as eloquent as angels, we should please some more by listening than by talking.

It is not unusual for the world to reject the voice of truth, because its tones are strange.

The stream of life forks, and religion is apt to run in one channel and business in another.

The way of implicit obedience to God is the way of safety and blessing—"The Lord will provide."

Individual conscience is often the duty of interest, and often but a more honorable name for self-will.

Man must work. He may work grudgingly or gratefully. He may work as a man or as a machine.

Pleasure must first have the warrant that it is without sin; then, the measure, that it is without excess.

Our best actions are often those of which we are unconscious; but this can never be unless we are always yearning to do good.

Femininities.

The truest self-respect is not to think of self.

A circle of rubies forms the newest engagement ring.

Every one has a besetting sin to which he or she returns.

It is a Georgia man who is living happily with wife No. 8.

Dr. Kate I. Kelsey holds the office of City Physician in Menomonee, Wis.

Cuff buttons are small and flat, and obtrude themselves as little as possible.

A woman has just died in Cuba, after much hesitation, at the age of 126 years.

Seven hundred and twenty-one diamonds make the Empress of Japan a happy woman.

The name of a woman who died in East Freehold, N. J., the other day was Williampe Antonides.

If you would know what is said of you in your absence, consider what is said of others in your presence.

Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone got lost in a fog in London the other evening, and were guided home by a policeman.

Hannah Battersby, the fattest woman before the public, weighs 728 pounds. She eats half a pound of candy daily.

It is not a misfortune for a young lady to lose her good name when a nice young gentleman gives her a better one.

O, woman! in ordinary cases so mere a mortal, how in the great and rare events of life dost thou swell into the angels!

It is the coroner's verdict which attributes the death of a Chicago woman to "an excessive indulgence in confectionery."

"Eyesology" is now chronicled as fashion's latest fad, and it means the telling of character from the color of the eyes.

A helping word to one in trouble is often like a switch on a railroad track—but one inch between wreck and smooth-rolling prosperity.

A Boston paper recently published a communication on "The Model Wife," and 9,000 Boston husbands swore next morning that they wrote it.

The Burmese boy who misses his education is looked down upon as no better than a girl, there being no schools for female children in Burmah.

Among the latest developments of woman's capacity in business is a Woman's National Lecture Bureau, which has its headquarters in Chicago.

Ben: Perley Poore makes a scandalous allegation, to wit: That snuff-dipping among the ladies was noteworthy at Washington during the winter lately past.

It is estimated that 30,000 females could find husbands inside of a fortnight in Wyoming and Montana territories, and why the procession doesn't move is a mystery.

In cooking-French, "baba" means a peculiar, sweet yeastcake; "bechamel," a rich, white sauce made with stock, and "bisque," white soup made of shell fish.

Jennie June has seen the women of all nations, and has made up her mind that American women stand at the head for health, complexion, taste and good temper.

Misfortune sprinkles ashes on the heart of man, but falls like dew on the head of woman and brings forth germs of strength of which she herself had no conscious possession.

A half century ago in Turkey it was considered a shame for a woman to read. To-day two schools for girls in Constantinople have been established by the Sultan himself.

Collecting silver spoons in Europe is the latest craze among American ladies. They buy a different shaped spoon in each chief city, and have the name of the place engraved on the bowl.

Sixty Chicago girls organized a co-operative establishment for making men's clothing for wholesale dealers. They have a good plant for their establishment, and the promise of plenty of work.

A girl says she has various kinds of beaux. For instance, a theatre beau, a reception beau, a candy beau a flower beau, a church beau and a beau beau. The beau beau is the favorite beau.

Judge Gray, of White county, Arkansas, was putting on his wedding clothes the other day, preparatory to marrying Miss Nannie Patty, when he complained of a pain in his right arm, called for water and then immediately died.

In Bavaria it is not good form for a lady to shake hands with a gentleman until she is very well acquainted with him, and no unmarried woman is allowed to speak on the street to any of her friends of the opposite sex, no matter how well she may know them.

"Give an example of an immovable obstacle," said the teacher. And the smart bad boy at the foot of the class suggested three girls on the sidewalk. The teacher, who usually had to walk in the middle of the street herself, sent him right up to the head of the class and told him to stay there for a week.

"What shall we name baby sister?" asked a mother of her little 4-year-old daughter. "Call her early, mamma; that's a pretty name." "Early! that is not a little girl's name." "Oh, yes, it is. Don't you remember you read to me about a little girl who was to be the May Queen, and who wanted her mother to call her Early?"

A hostess who cannot preserve her serenity upon even the most crucial occasion is lacking in one of the most essential qualities of an entertainer. The thoughtless spilling of her soup, the soiling of her whitest tablecloth, nay, even the smashing of a whole trayful of her best old family china should not cause one muscle of her countenance to change.

Masculinities.

Do not put too much trust in the man who praises you.

It is not well for a man to pray cream and live skim milk.

With the generality of men policy is much more powerful than principle.

The president of the Fat Men's Association, of Jersey City, weighs 416 pounds.

The man who thinks he never did a foolish thing isn't wise enough to know what folly is.

Marshall Field, the Chicago millionaire, has just spent $7,000 in fitting up his sitting-room.

England derives its name from the Angles, a Teutonic people who won a home in Britain.

A writer says there is some club in New York to which every man who owns a dress suit is eligible.

I wouldn't give a penny for a man who would drive a nail in slackly because he didn't get extra pay for it.

Lord Rothschild says "any business is good; selling matches even is a splendid business, if you do enough of it."

A residence of one year is required in the State of Delaware before a man is qualified by law to catch a shad.

Bad custom, consolidated into habit, is such a tyrant that men sometimes cling to vices, even while they curse them.

Earnestness is the best gift of mental power, and deficiency of heart is the cause of many men never becoming great.

What is experience? A poor little hut constructed from the ruins of the palace of gold and marble called our illusions.

He who is false to present duty breaks a thread in the loom, and may find the flaw when he may have forgotten the cause.

In the Middletown, N. Y., asylum is a man worth $500,000. His hallucination is that he is President of the United States.

Every man is his own ancestor, and every man is his own heir. He devises his own future, and he inherits his own past.

Senator-elect Reagan, of Texas, is said to be a model of kindness and good humor in his domestic life. He is never cross and never swears.

When a man becomes fairly convinced that he is a genius, it is then that the fringe slowly begins to form on the bottom of his trousers.

A man's heart gets cold if he does not keep it warm by living in it, and a censorious man is one who ordinarily lives out of his own heart.

Justice Gray is the only bachelor upon the United States Supreme Bench. He is the largest man in the court, the baldest, and is a famous epicure.

The opposing political parties at Long Branch, N. J., nominated for constable two tailors, each of whom is compelled by lameness to walk with a cane.

Senator J. R. McPherson says that the middle letter of his name stands for nothing except a designation in a community where there were many of his name less the "R."

Tired muscle and weary brain are not so hard to bear as that utter weariness and loathing of life, yet mixed with fear of death, which is the lot of those who have made pleasure their one aim in this life.

The retired list of the navy is swelling. There are 50 rear admirals, 15 commodores, 14 captains, 12 commanders, 20 lieutenant commanders, 11 lieutenants, 16 surgeons, 20 paymasters and 72 engineers.

A lady who had her photograph taken was showing it to her husband. "Do you think it looks like me?" she asked. "Yes," he said, after a critical examination; "it looks like you, only it seems very quiet."

It was the young man from the provinces who sent a bride a handsome present of silver engraved "W. P." When asked what the initials meant he innocently exclaimed that they stood for "wedding present!"

Men have different spheres. It is for some to evolve great moral truths, as the heavens evolve stars, to guide the sailor on the sea and the traveler on the desert; and it is for some, like the sailor and the traveler, simply to be guided.

William T. Bailey, of Delaware county, Ind., has been discharged from an insane asylum, after an incarceration of 20 years, brought about, it is alleged, by a man who had himself appointed guardian for Bailey, and who squandered his estate. The guardian lately died.

Positive proof. De Cad: "That little Miss Beach is a regular little fool." Bagley: "Oh, no." De Cad: "Yes, she is. Any girl who will flirt is a fool." Bagley: "Does she flirt?" De Cad: "Why, she flirted with me all last evening." Bagley: "Oh, well, then she is a fool."

A Chicago daily journal asked for letters from ladies who believed they had model husbands. The three most enthusiastic responses came from wives of drummers who are away from home nearly all the time. The problem, "How to be happy, though married," would seem to be solved at last, and in Chicago.

No chance for him. Peckham, meeting an old friend: "Why, Bingley, is this you? I haven't seen you for ten years. How are you, anyhow?" Bingley: "Oh, I'm just like I used to be. By the way, Peckham, how's your wife? You used to say you had the boss girl when you were single." Peckham, sadly: "She's still boss."

The following is copied from one of the Newcastle, England, parochial registers: "April 25, 1695, were buried James Archer and his son Stephen, who, in the month of May, 1658, were drowned in a coal pit, in the Gallaflatt, by the breaking in of water from an old waste. The bodies were quite entire after they had lain in the water 36 years and 11 months."

Recent Book Issues.

Messrs. T. B. Peterson & Brothers, of this city, have published a very fine steel engraving of Munkacsy's celebrated picture "Christ Before Pilate. It measures 22 by 28 and is an excellent work of art.

The "Monthly Readers" for the lower grades of schools issued by the Inter-state Publishing Company, Boston, are most excellent in furnishing matter that is appropriate in style, freshness and interest. They are splendidly adapted for teaching reading pleasantly.

"Beautiful Snow; with other poems never before published," by J. W. Watson, just issued by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, this city, is a new, elegant, enlarged and handsomely illustrated edition of one of the most attractive volumes ever published. The present volume contains, besides all the Poems that were in the original edition of "Beautiful Snow," and in the original editions of "The Outcast and Other Poems," many new and original poems by the author of "Beautiful Snow," fifty-seven in all, which have never before in print for the first time in the present edition. The volume is printed on the finest tinted plate paper, and bound in morocco cloth, black and gold, gilt top and back, price Two Dollars.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

"The Story of the Merrimac and the Monitor," the first of General Adam Badeau's "War Stories for Boys and Girls," with its graphic descriptions and spirited illustrations, is one of the prominent features of the April *St. Nicholas*. Another, but of a more peaceful type, is a charming article on "Harrow-on-the-Hill," number three of the "Four Great English Schools," which Mr. and Mrs. Pennell's graceful pen and pencil are making so attractive to American boy and girls. But to many readers the most welcome contribution will be the jolly fairy operetta, "the Children's Crusade," by E. S. Brooks, the author of the successful "Land of Nod." The music, which is simple and tuneful, is by Frederic Preston; the interesting serials, capital short stories, and many other articles in prose and verse, accompanied by spirited and handsome illustrations, make up a very attractive and instructive number. The Century Co., New York.

The *Magazine of American History* for April opens with the critical, racy contribution of Dr. Benjamin E. Martin, the well-known magazinist, on "The Transition Period of the American Press." The paper is elegantly illustrated. It is followed by the vigorous and well-told story of "Governor Spotswood's Horseshore Campaign, 1716, as related to the Romance of Cathay," by Edward Ingle, an account of Early Virginia Exploration that is as fascinating to read as it is useful to understand. The third chapter of this superb magazine is a brief tribute by the editor to "Henry Ward Beecher," whose fine crayon portrait is the appropriate frontispiece to the number. The several papers that follow are singularly bright, readable, and instructive. They are "The First Constitution of the State of New York," "The Heathenry War," "John Van Buren: A Study in By-gone Politics," "The Fall of Fort Duquesne;" "The Making of History in Alaska," and "A Hero of the Far North." The minor departments are equally full and engaging. Published at 30 Lafayette Place, N. Y. City.

"I have been calculating," said Mr. Statistic, "on the amount of finger-nails that is wasted in this world every year, and sir, it is something enormous. Now, sir, the average person trims off a thirty-second of an inch of nail from each finger every week, or three inches a year. The average of human life the world over is forty years. Look at that, sir! Ten feet of finger-nail for each finger—a round of 200 feet from the twenty fingers and toes. Well, sir, there are 1,500,000,000 people in this world, and altogether they waste on an average 300,000,000 feet, or 56,818 1-3 miles of finger-nail in a generation. Why, sir, that is sufficient to reach round the earth, and still leave nearly 10,000 miles to do our scratching with. And only think! it would take less than four generations to grow finger-nail enough to scratch the eyes out of the man in the moon. There is a heap of waste in this world sir, a heap," said Mr. Statistic.

Two pairs of sparrows were watched by an observant naturalist feeding their young in their nests in only one half hour with the larvæ of the bluebottle fly from a dead cat. They fetched these in all 104 times, and one of the birds also caught 14 flies on the wing. Now the common house fly is computed to produce in one season, so prolific is its progeny after progeny, no less than 20,000,000. The efforts of these four birds thus prevented the birth of no fewer than 280,000,000 flies by the capture of 14 flies, and 2,800,000 by the destruction of the 104 larvæ.

Mrs. Huber, of Brooklyn, has begun suit for damages in the sum of $5,000 against two or three of her acquaintances, for injuries alleged to have been received at their hands. The injuries consist of shocks to her nerves upon receipt of several vulgar valentines, which she has reason to believe were sent by the defendants. They, however, deny the accusation.

Having used Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup for the last few days, to my gratification I find it did me a great deal of good. I had a very severe cold which it cured in a very few days. C. C. ROBERTSON,
139 Main Street, Lynchburg, Va.

Constant and True.

BY H. B. D.

In a quiet nook upon the sea-coast of France, prominent for his piety and industry, dwelt a worthy fisherman called Hugo, and his son and niece. High upon the cliffs lived the lord of the district. Between the castle and the fisherman's modest home existed very friendly relations, for the young Cornet Falko and the handsome fisherman Jean were inseparable companions.

A more beautiful maiden than Marguerite, Hugo's niece, would have been hard to find.

She was only seventeen, yet her slender figure was rounded with the most perfect symmetry; while in striking contrast to the dark-eyed, dark-skinned girls of the village, her complexion was of a dazzling fairness, her eyes were blue, and brushed carelessly back from her snowy forehead, her hair hung in yellow ripples down to her waist.

It could hardly be wondered at that, living in daily companionship with a being so fair, Jean should have grown to love her with all the fervency of his nature.

And as Marguerite witnessed his loving obedience and tender care to his old father and read the purity of character that shone in his noble face, she returned that feeling. The aged fisherman looked on, well pleased that his son should have chosen so wisely.

One summer's afternoon, her day's duties all done, Marguerite sat by her young lover's side beneath the elm tree which spread its broad shade over their cottage home.

They were talking earnestly together, and Jean's eyes were bent in admiration upon Marguerite's exquisite face, when suddenly their attention was attracted by a carriage which stopped before the gate. An elegantly-dressed lady alighted, and proceeded up the path.

When she came to where the young people were sitting, and her eyes rested upon Marguerite (whose face a casual observer would have instantly noticed bore a striking resemblance to her own), a strange agitation seemed to seize her. Coming quickly to the girl's side, she caught her hand.

"Are you Hugo the fisherman's niece?" she said. Then, as Marguerite assented, she went on, excitedly, "Tell me, is this your home? Is he you call uncle within? If so, come with me."

The girl obeyed, with a wondering glance towards Jean.

What could it all mean? She was soon to learn. Some time later she rejoined her lover, saying, "Oh, Jean! we are going to be parted!"

Then, as quickly as possible, she told him what filled him with surprise, as he had never known it before, that she was not his cousin, nor, indeed, any relation to him, but that she was the daughter of an English lady, from whom she had been stolen when an infant.

Sixteen years before, Hugo the fisherman had found her on the shore near his cottage.

There had been no clue to tell whence she had come, or who had left her there; but he had saved the clothes which she had worn, and which were of rich materials, thinking that some time they might help to prove her identity.

It seemed that her mother had had two lovers, and upon her marrying one, the other had sworn to be revenged; and stealing the infant with the aid of an accomplice whom he had bribed to aid him, he had embarked upon a yacht and sailed until he had reached the secluded shore, where he had left her to her face.

For long years he had kept his wicked secret, but at length upon his deathbed he sent for the mother and confessed his sin, and told her where she could find her daughter.

She had come to the village to which he had directed her, and on making inquiries, had learned that a man named Hugo had found and cared for the child, and that she went by the name of his niece.

"And now you will have to leave me, Marguerite!" exclaimed the young man, sorrowfully, as he realized the full import of the story she had told him.

Marguerite's head drooped; but suddenly she sprang to his side and clasped her soft arms around his neck.

"Yes, Jean, I shall have to go where my mother takes me; but wherever that may be, my heart will still be here; and sometimes I feel that we shall be reunited."

Not long after, the lovers were compelled to say farewell. Mrs. Elayne looked on with a contemptuous smile upon her haughty face as she witnessed their affectionate parting.

She was a woman of fashion—"of the world, worldly"—and as soon as she had Marguerite to herself, she began to strive to eradicate from the girl's mind the fervent love with which she clung to the scenes and companions of her former home.

But her efforts in that direction were in vain, although she succeeded in preventing any communication between her daughter and her distant lover and adopted uncle, by forbidding her to write to them.

Time passed. One evening at a reception, which Marguerite, through ill-feeling well, had not attended, Mrs. Elayne met a young gentleman, the scion of an aristocratic and wealthy family, whom she immediately decided in her mind was just the *parti* she had wished for her daughter.

When she returned home she told Marguerite of her plans, and commanded her compliance.

"My child," she said, "there is no reason why you, with your beauty, should not marry exceedingly well. Now, this M. De Lyle is a gentleman any girl might fancy, and he is wealthy and irreproachable. I have invited him to our next reception, and I wish that you shall exert yourself to fascinate him. My heart is set upon the match."

At the familiar name, "De Lyle," the quick blood sprung to Marguerite's face, for it was the name Jean's friend, the young Count Falko, had borne. But she had read of his death in the papers soon after she had left home, so she thought that it could not be anyone she knew.

Hitherto she had always dutifully obeyed her mother's commands, even though they had often been very arbitrary; but now her spirit rose in arms to defend her love.

After that the girl had many a bitter sneer to bear, and at length her mother's anger at her firmness culminated.

It was the evening of the reception at which she was to meet for the first time the young foreigner.

Looking pale and listless in her rich party robes, Marguerite sat in her boudoir, awaiting her mother's summons, when, the door opening, Mrs. Elayne entered, and confronted her with these words: "Marguerite, I have something to say to you. I have forborne to speak upon the subject for several days; but let me tell you now that if you persist in thwarting my will, I shall disinherit you. Without money you would be unable to return to your former home, and you know me too well to think that I would ever repent of anything I had once done."

Marguerite did not reply, but she firmly resolved that rather than be untrue to her noble, absent Jean, she would endure any privations, even though her mother should do as she had threatened, and she should be cast alone and friendless upon the cold world.

An hour later the spacious drawing-room of the Elayne mansion presented a gorgeous spectacle; and, the fairest of all the galaxy of beauty assembled there, Marguerite, stood by her stately mother's side, assisting her to receive her guests.

Suddenly the great room, with its seductive music and gleaming lights, seemed to whirl dizzily before her eyes. There, awaiting to be presented, stood a well-remembered form.

"M. De Lyle, my dear Marguerite," said her mother, sweetly, at that moment.

The girl looked into the handsome, dark face of the gentleman whom her mother had called M. De Lyle. Only a moment she hesitated; then, regardless of the lookers-on, both her hands were clasped in Jean's, while Mrs. Elayne stood lost in intense surprise at the familiar meeting of the two she had thought strangers to each other.

All was explained satisfactorily afterwards. How, after young Falko's death, the old Marquis De Lyle had insisted upon adopting the youth in whom he had always taken the greatest interest, and whom his son had so loved. While his father lived, Jean had refused to leave him; but, when a year later he died, he hesitated no longer. To please his adopted father, who had formally declared him his heir, he consented to assume the name of De Lyle. Since then he had sought far and wide for some intelligence of her his faithful heart had always loved, and only by accident, through meeting her mother in society, had he at length ascertained her whereabouts.

"Will you not return with me, Marguerite?" her lover whispered, as a few days after their first meeting they sat together in the fragrant, odorous stillness of the conservatory, whither they had gone to converse unrestrainedly. "We have been parted too long now, my darling. Make me happy by promising to become my wife at once."

Mrs. Elayne, glad in her worldly heart at the success of her scheme, even though it had come about in an unforeseen way, made no objection; and when, a month later, Jean left for his home, he carried with him a fair young bride.

And, though she was now the wife of the heir to the immense De Lyle estates, those who remembered Marguerite as the little maiden, happy amid her simple surroundings, could not say that good fortune had changed her, unless it were to make her even more lovely and lovable.

The National Indian School Superintendent certainly voices the feeling of many unprejudiced Americans when he says so quietly in his annual report that "it is not creditable to us a nation that so much money should be used to keep the Indian in subjection while so little is expended to improve his condition." The figures of the last fiscal year are, in round numbers, $17,000,000 for warring against the red man and $9,000,000 for maintaining, civilizing and educating him.

Just before the recent cold snap in Georgia, a Cave Springs citizen threw a lot of spoiled "brandy cherries" into the back yard. His geese ate them greedily, and became drunk. Their owner thought they were dead, and thriftily plucked them. An hour or two later they were walking around the yard, and when the cold snap came the owner had to bundle them up in flannel to keep them from freezing.

This is the name of a man living in South Carolina: Harmon Dive-over Jump-under Come-either-to-me Out-yonder Go-fetch-it John Joshua William Hugh Hall Hiram Harvey Kiziah Jones. This is from a tombstone near Wetumka, Ala.: Henri Ritti Deeni Ritter, Emmi Ritter, Sweet Potato Cream Tartar Caroline Bostwick, infant daughter of Bob and Suckey Catlin." It was the name of a little negro girl.

R. R. R. RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

In from one to twenty minutes never fails to relieve PAIN with one thorough application. No matter how violent or excruciating the pain, the Rheumatic, Bedridden, Infirm, Crippled, Nervous, Neuralgic, or prostrated with disease may suffer, RADWAY'S READY RELIEF will afford instant ease. It instantly relieves and soon cures

Rheumatism,	**Neuralgia,**
Coughs,	**Colds,**
Cold in the Head,	**Sore Throat,**
Asthma,	**Bronchitis,**
Pneumonia,	**Sciatica,**
Headache,	**Inflammations,**
Toothache,	**Congestion,**

DIFFICULT BREATHING

Radway's Ready Relief is a Cure for every Pain, Sprains, Bruises, Pains in the Back, Chest or Limbs. It was the first and is the only

PAIN REMEDY

That instantly stops the most excruciating pains, allays inflammation, and cures Congestions, whether of the Lungs, Stomach, Bowels or other glands or organs by one application.

INTERNALLY, a half to a teaspoonful in half a tumbler of water will in a few minutes cure Cramps, Spasms, Sour Stomach, Nausea, Vomiting, Heartburn, Nervousness, Sleeplessness, Sick Headache, Diarrhœa, Colic, Flatulency and all internal pains.

Malaria in its Various Forms Cured and Prevented.

There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague, and all other Malarious, Bilious and other Fevers (aided by RADWAY'S PILLS) so quick as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

R. R. R. not only cures the patient seized with Malaria, but if people exposed to the malarial poison will, every morning take from 20 to 30 drops of Ready Relief in water and eat, say a cracker, before going out, they will prevent attacks.

Price, 50 cts. per Bottle. Sold by druggists.

DR. RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT

—THE—

GREAT BLOOD PURIFIER.

For the Cure of all Chronic Diseases.

Chronic Rheumatism, Scrofulous Complaints, &c., Glandular Swelling, Hacking Dry Cough, Cancerous Affections, Bleeding of the Lungs, Dyspepsia, Water Brash, White Swellings, Tumors, Pimples, Blotches, Eruptions of the Face, Ulcers, Hip Disease, Gout, Dropsy, Rickets, Salt Rheum, Bronchitis, Consumption, Diabetes, Kidney, Bladder, Liver Complaint.

The wonderful cures effected by the Sarsaparillian Resolvent of Kidney, Bladder, Ovarian and Urinary Diseases, its marvelous power in dissolving stone and calculous concretions, curing gravel, gleet and discharges from the genital glands; its powers over the kidneys in establishing a healthy secretion of urine, curing Diabetes, Inflammation or Irritation of the Bladder, Albuminous or Brick Dust Deposits, White Sand, etc., establishes its character as A GREAT CONSTITUTIONAL REMEDY.

Sold by all druggists. $1 a bottle.

RADWAY'S PILLS,

The Great Liver and Stomach Remedy,

For the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Loss of Appetite, Headache, Constipation, Costiveness, Indigestion, Biliousness, Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals or deleterious drugs.

Purgation made perfect by Dr. Radway's Pills. Uniformity and Safety of Action Secured. Perfect Digestion will be accomplished by taking one of Radway's Pills every morning, about 10 o'clock, as a dinner pill. By so doing

SICK HEADACHE,

Dyspepsia, Foul Stomach, Biliousness will be avoided and the food that is eaten contribute its nourishing properties for the support of the natural waste of the body.

☞Observe the following symptoms resulting from Disease of the Digestive Organs: Constipation, Inward Piles, Fulness of the Blood in the Head, Acidity of the Stomach, Nausea, Heartburn, Disgust of Food, Fulness or weight in the Stomach, Sour Eructations, Sinking or Fluttering of the Heart, Choking or Suffocating sensations when in a lying posture, Dimness of Vision, Dots or Webs before the Sight, Fever and Dull Pain in the head, Deficiency of Perspiration, Yellowness of the Skin and Eyes, Pain in the Side, Chest, Limbs and Sudden Flushes of Heat, Burning in the Flesh.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above named disorders.

PRICE 25 CTS. PER BOX. Sold by all druggists.

Send a letter stamp to DR. RADWAY & CO., No. 32 Warren street, New York. ☞Information worth thousands will be sent to you.

TO THE PUBLIC.—Be sure and ask for RADWAY'S and see that the name "RADWAY" is on what you buy.

Humorous.

THE ENGINEER'S STORY.

"Well, stranger, 'twas somewhere in '69,
I were running the 'Frisco fast express;
An' from Murder Creek to Blasted Pine
Were nigh on to eighteen mile, I guess.
The road were a a down-grade all the way,
An' we pulled out of Murder a little late,
So I opened the throttle wide that day,
And a mile a minute were 'bout our gait.

"My fireman's name was Lariat Bill,
A quiet man, with an easy way,
Who could rope a steer with a cowboy's skill,
Which he'd learned in Texas, I've heard him say;
The coil were strong as tempered steel,
An' it went like a bolt from a cross-bow flung,
An' arter Bill changed from saddle to wheel,
Just over his head in the cab it hung.

"Well, as I was sayin', we fairly flew
As we struck the curve at Buffalo Spring,
An' I give her full steam an' put her through,
An' the engine rocked like a livin' thing;
When all of a sudden I got a scare—
For thar on the track were a little child!
An' right in the path of the engine there,
She held out her little hands and smiled!

"I jerked the lever and whistled for brakes,
The wheels threw sparks like a shower of gold;
But I knew the trouble a down-grade makes,
An' I set my teeth an' my flesh grew cold.
Then Lariat Bill yanked his long lasso,
An' out in front of the engine crept—
He balanced a moment before the throw,
Then out in the air his lariat swept!"

He paused. There were tears in his honest eyes.
The stranger listened with bated breath—
"I know the rest of the tale!" he cries;
"He snatched the child from the jaws of death!
'Twas the deed of a hero—from heroes bred—
Whose praises the very angels sing!"
The engineer shook his grizzled head,
And growled, "He didn't do no such thing.

"He aimed for the stump of a big pine tree,
An' the lariat caught with a double hitch,
An' in less'n a second the train an' we
Were yanked off the track an' inter the ditch;
'Twere an awful smash, an' it laid me out—
I ain't forgot it and never shall."
"Were the passengers hurt?" "Lemme see—about—
Yes, it killed about forty—but saved the gal!"
—BOTHY BRET HARTE.

The unhappy side of life—Suicide.

Crossed in love—The suspenders your girl makes you.

It is said the Knights of Labor will not admit pugilists to membership, because they are always on the strike.

If handwriting is really an index of character, there can be no doubt that most newspaper men are inherently bad.

The reason why babies walk so much sooner now than formerly is because the price of baby carriages has gone up.

The warden of the Southern Indiana penitentiary has stolen $80,000 of the public money, and has been sent away from the penitentiary.

A household journal prints a recipe for making "Fly Pudding." It differs from the dried currant pudding. The latter is not more than half flies.

Collector: "How many times do you wish me to call for this money?" Debtor: "My dear sir, you need never call again. I shall not be offended."

"And were you not afraid of being in Marseilles? Didn't you dread the smallpox?" Mrs. Parvenue: "Oh, no, indeed! I've already had the celluloid, you know."

Spriggs: "How much older is your sister than you, Johnny?" Johnny: "I dunno. Maud uster be 25 years, then she was 20, and now she ain't only 18. I guess we'll soon be twins."

A woman thought she had struck the concentrated essence of spitefulness when she told her neighbor: "If you didn't wear a wig I'd like to pull your hair for you, you nasty thing!"

"I wish I was a public house," said a loving woman to her husband. "Why?" he inquired, with some degree of surprire. "Oh, because you would run in 18 or 20 times a day to see me."

The ancient proverb says: "You cannot get more out of a bottle than you put in it." That's an error. Besides what he puts in, he can get a headache, a sick stomach and perhaps ten days in the lock-up.

"Is this your fourth or your fifth marriage?" she asked in a loud voice of an old woman on the car. "Hush! Don't speak so loud. This is my fifth, but he's in poor health, and I may want to marry again."

When the youth of the period is at his desk in the store an hour seems about ninety minutes in length, but when he is at his girl's house in the evening its duration does not seem more than fifteen minutes.

Young Hobsonby: "Have you the Rosa Perfecto Cabana Victoria cigar?" Dealer, regretfully: "N-no, sir; but we have the Carissima Curanbay Los Angelos Ypsilanti brand." "How much are they?" "Two for five."

Young Featherly, at a late hour: "Really, Miss Clara, it's very annoying, but I had it on the top of my tongue but a moment ago. I was about to say—to say—er—singular, but it seems to have escaped me." Miss Clara, coming to his assistance: "Possibly you were about to say good-night, Mr. Featherly."

Mrs. Rongwerd's daughter is a strong, healthy girl, but withal quite pale. A lady, in speaking to her mother about her the other day, remarked: "I saw your daughter the other evening, and she was looking quite pale. Isn't she very delicate?" "Delicate?" replied Mrs. R., with a sniff of scorn. "No, indeed! I'll venture there ain't a girl in Washington society as indelicate as my daughter is."

NATIONAL HANDWRITING.

It is a remarkable fact that no man can ever get rid of the style of handwriting peculiar to his country. If he be English or American, he always writes in English style; if French, in French style; if German, Italian, or Spanish, in the style peculiar to his nation. Professor B—— states—

"I am acquainted with a Frenchman who has passed all his life in England, who speaks English like one of our own countrymen, and writes it with ten times the correctness of ninety-nine in a hundred of us; but yet who cannot, for the life of him, imitate our mode of writing. I knew a Scotch youth, who was educated entirely in France, and resided eighteen years in that country, mixing exclusively with French people, but although he had a French writing-master, and perhaps never saw anything but French writing in his life, he wrote exactly in the English style; it was really national instinct. In Paris, all the writing-masters profess to teach the English style of writing; but with all their professions, and all their exertions, they can never get their pupils to adopt any but the cramped hand of the French. Some pretend to be able to tell the characteristics of individuals from their handwritings. I know not how this may be, but certainly the nation to which an individual belongs can be instantly determined by his handwriting. The difference between the American or English and the French handwriting is immense; a schoolboy would distinguish it at a glance. Mix together a hundred sheets of manuscript written by Frenchmen, and another hundred written by Englishmen or Americans, and no one could fail to distinguish every one of them, though all should be written in the same language and with the same pens and papers. The difference between Italian, Spanish, and German handwritings is equally decided. In fact, there is about of great a difference in the handwritings as different nations as in their languages. And it is a singular truth that, though a man may shake off national habits, accent, manner of thinking, style of dress—though he may become perfectly identified with another nation, and speak its language as well, perhaps better, than his own—yet, never can he succeed in changing his handwriting to a foreign style."

THEY Wouldn't Wait for Him.—Lady—Now, since I've given you a good meal, won't you saw and split a little kindling wood for me?—Tramp—Madam, nothing would give me greater pleasure, but I have got to catch the through freight train at a siding a mile away, where she stands to permit the passage of the express on the main line. As I have sent no intimation of my intention to take this particular train, it will at once be obvious to you that they won't wait for me. They will proceed as soon as the express has passed, and I—madam, I will be left. But in gratitude for your kindness, madam, let me give you this piece of advice: The next tramp that comes along, make him saw before he sees your food—saw! see?

A BOY playing in the street in Paris a few days ago observed an elegantly-dressed man pour some liquid into a letter-box, then put in after it a lighted match and run away. The boy gave the alarm, but a number of letters and post-cards in the box were already destroyed. It is supposed that the culprit wished to get rid of some compromising correspondence.

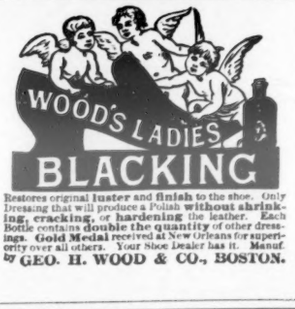
OF the nightingale it is said that in spring the males perch on a tree opposite the hens and sing their best one after another; whereupon the hens select their mates and fly off with them.

HUMPHREYS'
HOMEOPATHIC
SPECIFIC No. 28
In use 30 years. The only successful remedy for
Nervous Debility, Vital Weakness,
and Prostration, from over-work or other causes. $1 per vial, or 5 vials and large vial powder, for $5. SOLD BY DRUGGISTS, or sent postpaid on receipt of price.—Humphreys' Medicine Co., 109 Fulton St., N. Y.

1 Game Authors, 1 Game Dominos, 14 New Songs, 16 Complete Stories, Agt's Sample Box and this Ring 10c. 6 for 50c. VANNA CO., NEW HAVEN, CT.

40 Photos of Female Beauties, 10c. 120 for 25c. Sure to suit. Cat. 2c. Gem Agency, Orleans, Ind.

HIRES' IMPROVED ROOT BEER
25 cents PACKAGE
Makes Five Gallons of a delicious, sparkling temperance beverage. Strengthens and purifies the blood. Its purity and delicacy commend it to all. Sold by druggists and storekeepers everywhere.



Restores original luster and finish to the shoe. Only Dressing that will produce a Polish without shrinking, cracking, or hardening the leather. Each Bottle contains double the quantity of other dressings. Gold Medal received at New Orleans for superiority over all others. Your Shoe Dealer has it. Manuf. by GEO. H. WOOD & CO., BOSTON.

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S
VEGETABLE COMPOUND
OFFERS THE
SUREST REMEDY
FOR THE
PAINFUL ILLS AND DISORDERS SUFFERED BY WOMEN EVERYWHERE.
It relieves pain, promotes a regular and healthy recurrence of periods and is a great help to young girls and to women past maturity. It strengthens the back and the pelvic organs, bringing relief and comfort to tired women who stand all day in home, shop and factory.
Leucorrhœa, Inflammation, Ulceration and Displacements of the Uterus have been cured by it, as women everywhere gratefully testify. Regular physicians often prescribe it.
Sold by all Druggists. Price $1.00.
Mrs. Pinkham's "Guide to Health" mailed to any lady sending stamp to the Laboratory, Lynn, Mass.

RIBBONS!
We have purchased several large lots of Remnants at prices which enable us to offer a great bargain. Many of these Remnants are the finest quality of Silk Ribbons in the market, of different widths, in nearly all the popular colors and shades, and they are adapted for neckwear, dress and hat trimming, bows, etc., and for fancy work are just the thing. No lady can purchase such fine ribbons at any store for three times the money.
OFFER.—We will send a carefully assorted package of Ribbons, no piece less than two yards long, and the "GALAXY" 3 months for 50 cts. The "GALAXY" is a 40-page Magazine of Music, containing from 15 to 20 pieces in each number, which would cost from $2 to $5 at usual store prices, thus giving its readers over $50 worth of music a year for only $1, including an extra large package of ribbons, or three months and ribbons for 50c.
GUARANTEE.—We give more and better ribbons than any other firm, and send you a Magazine of Music, not a worthless advertising sheet.
Address,
GALAXY OF MUSIC, 408 Wash. St., Boston, Mass.

AGENTS WANTED (Samples FREE) for Dr. Scott's beautiful Electric Corsets, Brushes, Belts, Etc. No risk, quick sales. Territory given, satisfaction guaranteed. Dr. SCOTT, 843 B'way, N. Y.

R. DOLLARD,
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CHESTNUT ST.,
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Premier Artist
IN HAIR.

Inventor of the celebrated GOSSAMER VENTILATING WIG and ELASTIC BAND TOUPEE.
Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

FOR WIGS, INCHES.	TOUPEES AND SCALPS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.	No. 2. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.	No. 3. Over the crown of the head.
No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.	

He has always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.
Private rooms for Dyeing Ladies' and Gentlemen's Hair.

DEAFNESS Its causes, and a new and successful CURE at your own home by one who was deaf twenty-eight years. Treated by most of the noted specialists without benefit. Cured Himself in three months, and since then hundreds of others. Full particulars sent on application.
T. S. PAGE, No. 41 West 31st St., New York City.

NEW Sample Book of beautiful cards, 14 Games, 12 tricks in magic, 436 Album verses. All for a 2c. stamp. STAR CARD CO., Station 15, Ohio.

$250 A MONTH. Agents wanted. 90 best selling articles in the world. 1 sample free. Address JAY BRONSON, Detroit, Mich.

CARDS SUNDAY SCHOOL, REWARD AND VISITING. Lovely Samples, Rose-tone Catalogues, & Agts. terms for 3c. stamp. W. C. Griswold & Co., Centerbrook, Ct.

A CARD.—To all who are suffering from errors and indiscretions of youth, nervous weakness, early decay, loss of manhood, &c., I will send a recipe that will cure you, FREE OF CHARGE. This great remedy was discovered by a missionary in South America. Send self-addressed envelope to REV. JOSEPH T. INMAN, Station D, New York City.

PILES. Instant relief. Final cure and never returns. No indelicacy. Neither knife, purge, salve or suppository. Liver, kidney and all bowel troubles—especially constipation—cured like magic. Sufferers will learn of a simple remedy free, by addressing. J. H. REEVES, 78 Nassau St., N. Y.

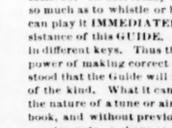
Make money odd days selling "Wonders" and other new books. Write A. GORTON & CO., Phila., Pa.

18 New Hidden Name Border Cards and Ring, 10c., 6 pks., & 6 rings 50c. Munson Bros., Mt. Carmel, Ct.

WOMAN WANTED SALARY $25 to $50 for our business in her vicinity. Responsible house. References exchanged. GAY M'F'G CO., 14 Barclay St., N.Y.

SECRET OF BEAUTY
BLOOM OF YOUTH
WHITE LILAC SOAP
Every Lady desires to be considered handsome. The most important adjunct to perfect beauty is a clear, smooth, soft and beautiful skin. Ladies afflicted with Tan, Freckles, Rough or Discolored Skin and other Blemishes, should lose no time in applying this old established and delightful Toilet preparation.
It will immediately obliterate all such imperfections and is perfectly harmless.
It has been chemically analyzed by the Board of Health of New York City, and pronounced entirely free from any material injurious to the health or skin.
Price, 75 Cents Per Bottle.
Sold by Druggists and Fancy Goods Dealers Everywhere.

Depot 39 Barclay St., N. Y.
The new and exquisite Toilet Soap which for perfect Purity and Permanency of Delicate fragrance is unequalled for either Toilet or Nursery use. No materials unless carefully selected and absolutely pure ever enter into the manufacture, hence this Soap is perfectly reliable for use in the Nursery and unrivalled for general Toilet use.
LAIRD'S WHITE LILAC TOILET SOAP is refreshing and soothing to the skin, leaving it beautifully clear soft and smooth.
Price, 20c. per Cake. Box 3 Cakes 50c.
Sent by Mail upon Receipt of Price.
Sold by Druggists and Fancy Goods Dealers Everywhere.


TO PLAY MUSIC
WITHOUT STUDY!
This Can Be Done by Means of the
INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE to the PIANO or ORGAN.
Anyone knowing a tune, either "in the head," as it is called, or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC OR THE INSTRUMENTS. In fact it may be the first time they have ever seen a piano or organ, yet if they know so much as to whistle or hum a tune—say "Way Down on the Swanee River," for instance—they can play it IMMEDIATELY, correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE. THE GUIDE shows how the tunes are to be played with both hands and in different keys. Thus the player has the full effect of the bass and treble clefs, together with the power of making correct and harmonious chords in accompaniments. It must be plainly understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and WITHOUT FAIL is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book, and without previously needing to know the difference between A or G, a half-note or a quarter-note, a sharp or a flat. The Guide is placed on the instrument, and the player, without reference to anything but what he is shown by it to do, can in a few moments play the piece accurately and without the least trouble. Although it does not and never can supplant regular books of study, it will be of incalculable assistance to the player by "ear" and all others who are their own instructors. By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.
The Guide, we repeat, will not learn how to read the common sheet music. But it will teach those who cannot spend years learning an instrument, how to learn a number of tunes without EITHER PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OR STUDY. A child if it can say its A, B, C's and knows a tune—say "The Sweet Bye and Bye"—can play it, after a few attempts, quite well. There are many who would like to be able to do this, for their own and the amusement of others, and to such we commend The Guide as BOUND TO DO for them ALL WE SAY. Its cheapness and usefulness, moreover, would make it a very good present to give a person, whether young or old, at Christmas. Almost every home in the land has a piano, organ or melodeon, whereon seldom more than one of the family can play. With this Guide in the house everybody can make more or less good use of their instruments.
The Guide will be sent to any address, all postage paid, on receipt of FIFTY CENTS. (Postage stamps, 2's, taken.) For Ten Cents extra a music book, containing the words and music for ith my popular songs, will be sent with The Guide. Address
THE GUIDE MUSIC CO.
726 SANSOM ST., PH'

"Ne!" he whispered
not mean to disturb
ort against

Latest Fashion Phases.

Each month, however unpromising the season may appear, brings with it some new addition to the ever increasing number of novelties which compose the current fashions, or else some novel application of an already standard fabric or mode.

There is always something new to record, and at present one is most struck with the important place which brocades of the most sumptuous description occupy in dinner and evening toilettes.

In spite, however, of the extreme richness of the fabrics, and of the brilliancy of the bead and silk embroideries employed for these dresses, there is a certain regal simplicity about them which entirely prevents their having anything like a theatrical appearance.

They have no resemblance to stage toilettes, and their splendor is of a subdued kind, owing to the careful choice of colors, and the half-tints that are blended together, in a most scientific manner.

Some shade of yellow is the favorite color for the ground of these brocades, the pattern on this being in velvet or plush in a rich shade of grenat, nacarat, mahogany, and similar tints.

A helitrope design also forms a beautiful combination with an old pink, celadon, green, or pale yellow ground.

Dinner dresses are also made of white brocade or damask, trimmed with fur and sparkling with diamonds. Black dinner toilettes, richly trimmed with lace and beads, are also fashionable.

A novelty in bead ornaments, destined to take the place of a panel and less heavy than this style of trimming, consists of a set of three long, narrow, arrow-shaped motifs, very brilliant in appearance, and placed on the three pleats forming the panel, about four inches above the edge of the dress; the pleats are only fastened down at the upper part. Similar arrow-shaped motifs are placed on the corsage and sleeves.

The passementerie and beaded ornaments, in the form of collars, yokes, epaulets and panels, seem to increase in beauty and in variety. Immense use will be made of them throughout the spring.

Lace is employed in very great profusion for evening toilettes, both for the skirts and bodices; in many toilettes, especially those worn by young ladies, the skirt consists of one deep flounce of lace, and the corsage, paniers and back drapery are of faille or bengaline.

Older ladies, to whom this straight style of skirt is less becoming, prefer to cover the skirt, or the lower part of it, with a series of narrower flounces, adding a draped tablier of lace or of some silken fabric.

In some very beautiful toilettes one side of the skirt is thus covered to the hips with flounces of plain or of gold embroidered lace; on the other side is a wide panel of bead and silk embroidery worked on tulle, or else a network of beads, and between these, but draped differently on the two sides, falls a long tablier of pointed faille.

The long train is of the same material, and so also is the corsage, which is cut in a low pointed shape, and ornamented round the neck and in front with beads and embroidery matching the panel.

Another rich ball dress has a tunic of point de France falling over flounces of the same lace, and terminating on each side under a short coquille of similar lace interspersed with loops and ends of ribbon. The low pointed corsage crossed in front, a very short drapery in front, and the long, full train are of flame colored plush.

A folded drapery of crepe lisse follows the line of the open corsage, but is placed under the edge and disappears at the shoulders, which are ornamented with small bows of ribbon. The train of this dress, as of most evening toilettes, is mounted in large fluted pleats on the point of the corsage.

A few dresses, especially those which are more or less in redingote form, have the train cut with the back of the corsage in the Princess style; this mode is chiefly adopted with velvet or plush.

Lace is again very much employed for the fichus draping the open bodices of dinner dresses and for the sleeves of these toilettes.

A corsage of velvet or plush matching the skirt and trimmed with costly lace, is much in vogue with dinner toilettes; the bodice is open in a square or pointed shape in front, and is often finished off with a corselet of some different material, generally white.

Brocade, or a similar fabric, richly embroidered with beads, or else some treasured fragment of fine handwork enriched with gold thread, is the kind of material these corselets are made of.

The lace fichu is crossed, and the ends are tucked inside the corselet, or the lace chemisette, if this is worn, also ends under the top of the bodice.

Sleeves are either made entirely of lace or else the delicate fabric appears in puffs, bouillonnes, and flounces under the open sleeve, or between the quaint scallops in which it is cut.

Bodices are also cut in pointed scallops at the edge, corresponding with the sleeves, and a deep lace flounce falls below and between the scallops.

Broche silks in large, handsome Renaissance patterns, the design and the ground being in one and the same color, are being used for visiting toilettes in combination with plain velvet in the same shade.

Various styles are adopted for these dresses, of which the following is a good example:

The skirt is made of the broche silk, and pleated in wide flat pleats on the right side and across the front. On the left side is a flat pleated panel of broche, from under which starts the long tunic draped at the top, and falling in a diagonal line across the skirt.

The plain pointed corsage and the full pleated back breadths, completing the skirt, are of bronze velvet, matching the broche.

No article of our dress plays a more important role in our active life than our handkerchiefs, those dainty trifles of lace and batiste.

Do they not dry our tears, and conceal our smiles and blushes? As a flag of friendship we wave it in signal of arrival or separation. We impregnate it with our favorite perfume. The mimic assists his impersonations by its means.

Handkerchiefs for ball toilettes are of the most luxurious description, but they are principally white, and contain a quantity of lace.

Young ladies have charming examples edged with Valenciennes, and cut with two rows of lace insertion.

Colored lingerie is extremely fashionable—white grounds with colored design; they are simply trimmed, so that all novelty of beauty is in the material itself. A simple lace edging threaded with very narrow white satin ribbon is all as a rule.

A more complicated model is of white batiste sprinkled with pink cubes. The low round neck is trimmed with a pleating of batiste for a berthe edged with lace, the pleating being threaded with narrow pink ribbon at the base.

Corsets are worn shorter than formerly, and are far more trimmed. A charming trimming is three rows of worked holes, in each of which is threaded a narrow satin ribbon; lace above and below finishes this ornament, which can be entirely white or black, or of the same color as the corset. Black lace can be worn on a colored corset.

The white petticoats are gone out; no one wears them in the street, and even for evening dress ladies prefer silk or plush. Over-petticoats are made of surah, moire, and shot taffetas, lined with flannel or silk, and trimmed with lace.

Ladies turn old silk skirts and slips into petticoats, trimmed with a lace flounce some 12 inches wide, or two or three rows of lace insertion.

Petticoats are being made of old pink or heliotrope plush, and of straw or blue moire; but these are too rich for the majority, who keep to flannel-lined glace taffetas, edged with a lace flounce.

Under-petticoats are equally fanciful, of spotted or otherwise figured flannels, of pekin flannels, of striped skirting, and woolens of various colors striped with red or blue hair stripes.

Odds and Ends.

SCOTCH BROTHS.

Scotland is as pre-eminently the land of broths as of cakes, and that they form so important a feature in Scotch cookery is due, firstly and mostly, to their economy, very little meat being required; vegetables, pulse and grain, all of which are cheap, entering largely into their composition.

They are to be recommended also for digestibility and nourishment. Especially where there are families of children to rear, is the economy of broths acknowledged by those who use them.

The chief national broth or soup, famed alike in prose, verse, and oral tradition in all parts of Northern Britain, is Cocky-Leekie.

It was used on great occasions, and figured especially as the broth par excellence at marriage feasts. I know of one festive occasion, the marriage breakfast, or rather dinner, of a laird's daughter, at which fourteen or sixteen fowls were boiled in a huge cauldron or pot, and made into cocky-leekie.

This happened in the days when the whole party, after partaking of the wedding dinner, took the bride and bridegroom to the bridegroom's house, with the bride's dowry, in kind, heading the procession. This consisted of a head or two of cattle, besides the money "tocher," and her well-spun linen and blankets which the bride always supplied.

Now to make *Cocky-Leekie* in a more everyday manner. A gallon and a half of water is put into a broth pan and allowed to boil, a pair of good plumps fowls are trussed and put in with a dessertspoonful of salt. Leeks are cut up finely, and added in great quantity, as they are the predominating feature in this broth, other vegetables, such as parsley and a little turnip, cut finely, are sometimes added. This is boiled for two hours. The fowls are then taken out, cut into joints of a convenient size, and returned to the broth, pepper and salt to taste being added. It is boiled again for a quarter of an hour, and is then ready to serve. The leeks are put in in such quantity as to make the broth quite thick; but if so many be not liked, bread-crumbs are often added for thickening. It is then served with boiled potatoes and bread.

Mutton Broth is the favorite Scotch broth. For it a gallon and a half of water is put into the broth pan, with half a pound of pearl barley, the latter being previously washed in two or three waters, to free it from dust or other foreign matter. This is allowed to boil. A neck of mutton weighing about five pounds, the bone of which is chipped so as to be easily cut, is put into the boiling water, together with any vegetables in season. Just now a pint of green peas, half a turnip, cut in square pieces, a bunch of parsley, a cabbage leaf, cut very finely, a large bunch of green onions, and two rather large carrots, cut in slices, would be suitable. A little salt only is put in with these to make the scum rise; it is skimmed off as it rises. The whole is boiled two hours; it is boiled gently at first about half an hour, and then more quickly the remainder of the time. The mutton is placed on a hot meat dish, or "ashet," as it is called in Scotland, and the pieces of turnip placed around it as a garnish. The broth is poured into a tureen, from which it is ladled into the soup plates. The mutton is eaten as a second course with the pieces of turnip and whole boiled potatoes. Leg of mutton is often used for mutton broth, but that made from the neck is much sweeter and richer. Beef broth is made in the same way as the preceding from a good boiling piece.

Skink Soup is another much liked and often made soup; it is made from the shin of beef. A well-broken shin of beef is put into a gallon and a half of boiling water, and boiled for two hours; it is then taken out, and the meat cut from the bone in small neat pieces, the liquor being skimmed at the same time. The bone is returned to the liquor and boiled four hours longer. This part of the process is generally done the day before the soup is wanted. The vegetables are then added in about the same proportion as for mutton broth (see above). Add the pieces of beef at the same time, with pepper and salt to taste, and boil till the vegetables are tender.

Fowl Broth is made like mutton broth, the fowl being used instead of mutton. Fowl and mutton broth is excellent, about three pounds of the mutton being used with one fowl. A fowl which has passed its chickenhood sometime is often used in making broth, as it gets well-cooked. To prepare a fowl for broth, it is plucked and drawn, wiped out with a damp cloth, then stuffed both in the crop and body with a stuffing made as follows: A little oatmeal, according to the size of the fowl or fowls, is put into a basin with a little salt and a level teaspoonful of pepper—for one fowl—and a few green onions or chives cut very finely; this is mixed to a paste with good fresh butter. The crop and body are filled with this, and the fowl trussed so that the stuffing cannot escape; if it should do so the broth is practically spoiled. When pearl barley cannot be procured whole rice is often substituted, but it is not nearly so nice.

Potato Soup is another thick broth much used amongst the poorer classes. Six or eight potatoes are cut up into small pieces, and put into a saucepan with sufficient cold water to cover them, about four inches; this is allowed to boil; then bones and any scraps of cooked or uncooked meat, fat, or even pieces of suet, cut finely, are added. Onions according to taste, and pepper and salt are also put in. This is allowed to boil for an hour and a quarter. The bones are now removed, and the soup poured into a tureen and served with oat-cakes.

Hotch Potch is an old-fashioned Scotch dish, made in the spring, when there are plenty of fresh vegetables. It is a thick puree-like soup. It may be made either from fresh or cooked meat. This is the way of making it: Three or four pounds of loin chops are put into a saucepan with three quarts of boiling water. Peas, haricot beans, half a turnip, parsley, a little bit of cabbage, and some green onions are added. Boil slowly one hour. Season with pepper and salt. It should be thick when done.

One day a fire broke out near a large menagerie at Moscow. As it was impossible to save all the lions and elephants, the manager of the establishment was requested to point out such of his treasures as could be removed with safety. When he passed by the monkey cage, a big orang-outang screamed out, "For God's sake let me out!—I never was a monkey until I came here. I am an honest man. Save me!"

Confidential Correspondents.

ALONE.—You cannot go alone. Your partner by assisting you, "orders it up." Consequently you must play with him in the hand.

SMITH.—An agnostic neither believes nor disbelieves in the existence of a Deity. He holds that on these matters no evidence of any sort is forthcoming.

GELLO.—Cut the map up so that it will fit your pocket; then paste it upon fine canvas, leaving a narrow space between the joins of the map sufficient to allow for folding.

HENRY F.—According to our old-fashioned notion of politeness, we think that to pass a lady in the way you mention, and under the circumstances described, would very justly incur the charge of slight, to say the least.

BELLE.—You can curl ostrich feathers by holding them at a moderate distance from the fire and passing a knife or pair of scissors—the blunt edge—over them, taking a little at a time. Some use a paper-knife; there is then no danger of cutting the fibres.

J. F. T.—If you read three chapters of the Bible every week-day, and five every Sunday, you will finish the whole Bible in a very little less than a year. There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible. If there were ten more, you would finish the reading of the whole book, at that rate, in exactly one ordinary year of 365 days, including fifty-two Sundays.

DAN.—In Cuba the white population is more or less liable to ague and yellow fever, but, except in low, marshy districts, the climate is superior to that of most of the West Indies, and has, indeed, such a reputation for salubriousness that the island is often resorted to by invalids from the United States. Hurricanes, too, are less frequent and violent. At Havana the mean annual temperature is 77° Fah.; the winter register being 73°, the summer 81° 5°

ALICE.—You should not marry "No. 1," for two reasons—first, you care more for some one else; and second, "No. 1" does not seem very anxious to marry you. Neither should you marry "No. 2." He appears to seek you for sordid reasons. He is uncongenial, and when your unreasonable passion has evaporated you can expect nothing but unhappiness with him. For the present, be content as you are. There are worse conditions in life than that of an unmarried woman with money of her own.

WOODMAN.—1. People who suffer from nervous irritability generally do so from an original defect of constitution. In your case however, from the nature of some of the symptoms you mention, we are inclined to think the trouble may proceed from a cause entirely within your own control. Are you quite sure it is not so? 2. Certainly you can have dyspepsia without pain. We would advise you to take plenty of exercise, and endeavor to get rid of the symptom to which you specially call our attention.

CLOVER.—A girl may leave her father's home at any time if she is dunce enough; he cannot imprison her. But she must be ready to face many perils, and she must also disobey her father boldly. In your case you would not be dragged back by the hair of the head or anything of that kind, but you would soon go to ruin. Get out of your fix of sulks, and, if you want to take a situation, secure one before you cut yourself off from the shelter of home. Ah, if you wild little creatures could only see what becomes of those who run away from home, you would go down on your knees and pray to be delivered from ill-temper and petulance!

RED.—As to which of the two queens (Mary and Elizabeth) is now the most respected it is difficult to say. Perhaps if it were said that Elizabeth is the most respected, and Mary the most regretted, we should have a pretty truthful statement of the case. Mary was so beautiful and so brilliant, and had such a romantic life and tragic death, that she has been an object of interest and sympathy for three hundred years. But Elizabeth, whose more masculine qualities enabled her to achieve great triumphs in government, had few of those feminine gifts which excite the imagination and make their possessor an object of romantic and enduring interest through ages.

FRESNO.—Don Quixote is the hero of the famous satirical romance with which Cervantes "laughed away" a class of silly and sometimes vicious works of fiction, which was popular in Spain, in his time. Don Quixote is crazy on one subject only; he believes himself to be a knight errant, of the traditional type, commissioned to redress wrong and beset with hostile magicians, giants and wicked knights. In all other respects the poor gentleman is a type of the best Spanish character; he is truthful, brave, religious, courteous and profoundly wise, except in matters which concern his craze. The other characters are drawn with great strength and skill, and the whole book has become one of the acknowledged classics of the world.

LILY.—Though you are no doubt fully as innocent as other lilies of your pretty family, you hardly strike us as being quite so retiring as many other specimens of your modest species. We cannot honestly advise you to send "a little letter of congratulation" to the "very good young gentleman" of whom you write to us. As you ask us the question point-blank, we have no hesitation in telling you that in our opinion it would be a trifle forward and unladylike to write to him at all after having spoken to him only twice in general society. You are so very anxious to "act with propriety" and not to appear "fast," as we judge from your under-lining both expressions, that we feel eager to save you from what appears to us a very decidedly rapid precipitancy. Wait till the good young gentleman in question moves of himself.

L. H.—Body-Brussels is supposed to be the best carpet of its kind, and is characterized by closer and finer weaving. In Brussels the pattern is made by means of drawing colored worsted of the required color up through a linen body and turning it over wires. These wires are afterwards drawn out, leaving the loops standing. Roxbury, we know nothing of. There is a famous carpet known as Axminster, which differs from Brussels by being woven on the Turkey carpet principle. That is, the worsted tufts used in the pattern, are thrust or tied, mostly by hand in the body of the carpet by means of linen thread. Wilton and tapestry carpets are woven like Brussels, only the wires in their case have a groove in them, and instead of being drawn out, the loops of the worsted are cut. The yarn used in weaving these latter, are likewise dyed different colors on the same length to suit the pattern, whereas the real Brussels is dyed in one color, different lines of yarn being used for the various shades of the pattern. Philadelphia is the greatest manufacturing place of carpets in America.